



THE CONTEMPORARY PROJECT
BRIDGE-MARKET. CONNECTING THE IN-BETWEEN
THE MARKETPLACE AS AN ARTICULATOR OF PUBLIC SPACE

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ABSTRACT

The marketplace has been throughout history a powerful promotor of public space, from the beginning when trade and dealings between people were done in these special designated places it quickly became a necessity of everyday life. With the passing of time and the arrival of modernity our cities have changed, and so the way we approach the market as an everyday aspect of our lives; markets today are losing ground to more convenient ways of shopping like the supermarket or convenience store, the cultural exchange that the market provides to a community is being replaced by fast and lifeless methods of buying. The market must evolve in order to survive these changes, it has to bring more to the city than a place to buy and sell, it needs to become a new centrality where public and private spaces meet. The hybrid-building typologies have provided us with new ways of designing the city, where mixed use is key in order to promote the use of space in different ways, this diversity creates possibilities for the city to adapt and to move. In this thesis I explore the role of the hybrid space and how it can be applied to the market, taking special emphasis on the bridge-building structure and how it can create a relationship with the public and private realms and provide in-between spaces for the contemporary life. The proposal acts literally as a bridge that links a system of housing, co-working areas, commerce and public space with the Fira II building, and at its core the marketplace serves as the articulating piece for the whole project.

KEY WORDS: Public space, community, urban acupuncture, in-between, mixed-use, hybrid typologies, catalyst, system, new centrality, bridge-building.

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CHAPTER 1. ORIGINS

FROM NECESSITIES TO COMMODITIES



Fig.1.Bazar of Athens. Painting by Edward Dodwell

This chapter introduces the appearance of the marketplace and its evolution through time. More than for narrative means, the understanding of the beginning of the market will help determine the key characteristics that make it an essential part of the everyday life of a city. Knowing how the market has been in the past a crucial part of living in society and a platform for public living can provide a guideline to new market developments, and at the same time understand what happened with the arrival of the Modern Era, where there was a complete shift in the concept of living. Along with Modernity came the supermarket and other stores that offered fast and convenient shopping, this was a turning point in the way we interact with shopping, but even more important it changed the way we interact with each other in the modern spaces designated for buying and selling goods, the shift from the feeling of community of a market into a less personal and intimate machine such as a supermarket. The chapter closes with a desire, a proposal to return to the idea of the market as a main place in daily life, where besides shopping other activities can take place and living in community can happen naturally.

“Throughout history, cities and markets have sustained each other, the former providing location, demand, and social context for the latter; the latter providing sustenance, profit, and cultural verve to the former.” (T.C. Bestor)

1.1 FIRST MARKETS



Fig.2. 14th Century depiction of camel caravan on the Silk Road. Unknown Artist.

“In the beginning, commerce is an affair between ethnic groups; it does not take place between members of the same tribe or of the same community but is in the oldest social communities an external phenomenon, being directed only towards foreign tribes.” (M. Weber)

Trade has been from the beginning of society a means to sustain life, it is the engine that keeps the economical wheel of our world turning and moves us forward, it is a practice that has enabled us to establish as system of wealth and currency that rules the way we interact. The marketplace is one of the main contributors to this system, in which products where given a specific value according to pre established standards that allowed for the exchange based on balance, at first it was with exchange of goods that amounted to the same practical value as the product and later with the arrival of the currency.

Before the established communities, social life consisted on constant movement, hunting and gathering were the only sources of food and sustain and there where no established places for life to settle. With the arrival of agricultural knowledge, ancient cultures had the opportunity to settle down, this provided the chance for growth in numbers of crops and domesticated animals, meaning that the producers had enough food to sustain themselves as well as some leftovers that where then used for trade. This was the origin of the trading system, where people could use the leftovers of their produce to exchange them and get something they could not make or get themselves; this offer and demand system slowly started to grow into an everyday life necessity. In the beginning, products where not evenly distributed around the world and easy access to them was not possible, this created the need to trade between different groups where nomad communities and trading routes were established with the purpose of selling goods that were only available in their region to other groups that needed them. “Communities living on an ecological boundary have also tended to trade with one another. A nomadic tribe in a desert, for example, would trade with a sedentary tribe living in the area next to the desert.”¹ This necessity brought the possibility for a clash of cultures, interaction between groups with different traditions and beliefs was a secondary consequence of the need to acquire specific products that where before unavailable, and in this way cultural exchange started to happen naturally.

The first approaches to trade were a response to the need to sell over production together with the need to get ingredients from other inaccessible places, it was

¹ Swedberg, R. (2003). Ch.4 P.135 Principles of Economic Sociology. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvcn4g75.10>

not a desire of trading goods for profit, it was more an exchange for value for each community. This means that at first trade was not a main part of the economy of a settled group, it was something that Weber refers to as “external money”². For us this is important because it explains the fact that the act of trading, and consequentially the market, evolved naturally and gradually from a secondary income source into the main economic engine in early civilizations, but at the same time it was the most contributing factor that allowed the first interactions between cultures.

This with time started to become part of the daily life, more specified professions started to appear where specialization was the main incentive for inhabitants to thrive from selling goods only they could produce, the same cultural clash enabled people to learn from other areas of the world different techniques and then apply them to produce for their own community. The workshops where these items were produced or the land where the crops were harvested consisted in extensions of the house, and so the early markets happened in the streets, outside people’s homes. Here is another type of cultural interaction, the fabric of the neighborhood was strengthened, stronger bonds between people were created because of proximity and familiarity, this relationship is still a common denominator in the way contemporary markets work. “Local markets, as well as much more specialized ones such as urban wholesale markets of professional traders, are often organized around complex, multi stranded relationships that intertwine gender, ethnicity, class, and kinship, as well as economic role.”³

As time passed the social structure of the market grew, and thus it demanded growth in its spatial span as well, the streets were no longer places where food could be kept clean because production and demand increased, and the operational and logistical restrictions enabled for the relocation of the market to special designated spaces, these spaces were often in central areas of the city to allow for maximum service to as many inhabitants as possible. This is the first step towards the formal market structure known today as the standard; becoming a central and specific place that concentrated the sale and acquisition of goods, the market gained meaning as a new center for activity, the number of merchants and buyers exponentially increased

² Quoted in Swedberg, R. (2003). Ch.4 P.136. Referring to the distinction between internal economy and external economy through trade in early communities.

³ Vanberg, V. (2001). P. 9227 Markets: Anthropological Aspects. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences.

and standardization of products could happen. It is crucial to note the importance of other entities that quickly took involvement into the creation and operation of these new central spaces, inspectors were introduced to ensure quality, governments could now charge vendors for spots within the market square and other branches of the civic area started to thrive from an established economical source. All these factors gave the market much more power as a place of multiplicity, it was not only the spot to buy but also the source of revenue for many government groups and officials.

I have tried to explain briefly how the act of trading as a necessity of sustenance gave place to the first market-like structure, which quickly became essential in every major community. It is important to know its beginnings in order to understand how it could evolve and become more complex with the passing of time.

1.2 CIVIC LIFE IN THE MARKETPLACE



Fig.3.19th Century painting of the Agora of Athens at the time of Pericles. Unknown artist.

“More than just public spaces for buying and selling food, public markets were civic spaces - the common ground where citizens and government struggled to define the shared values of the community.” (H. Tangires)

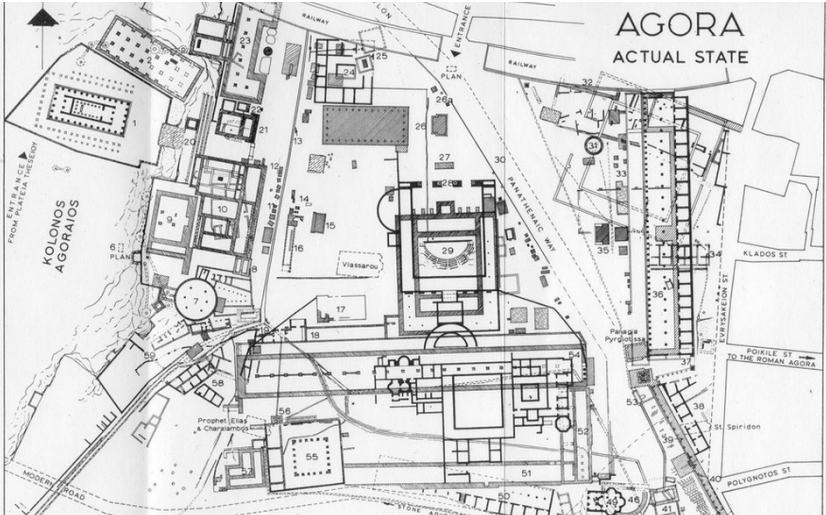


Fig.4. Monuments of Athens. By Alexander Philadelphus.

When the markets moved from the streets into the main squares of the cities there was a revolution in the social structure that surrounded trade, with the more active involvement of government, economic and private institutions, the market grew to become a platform of civic interaction. The dealings of society were carried out in this new civic centers because they naturally offered the ideal space for them to happen: they were close to other important civic buildings, they were central in the city and so had easy access, and they provided the possibility to do business or acquire goods for the citizens.

A perfect example of the success of the market as a square can be seen in the Greek agora. “The agora, literally “the gathering place”, was the focal point of community life in the Greek city state. A sizable square situated normally toward the centre of the city , it served early as a meeting place, and was later bordered by buildings to house the civic administration and courts of law. The open area served as a market at all times...”⁴ The agora throughout the years suffered many changes, being a very active piece of the Greek civic machine it adapted to different situations in time and evolved along as the civilization’s needs changed. The most important example of this evolution is the

⁴ Thompson, H. A. (1954). P. 9 The Agora at Athens and the Greek Market Place. Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, 13(4), 9–14. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/987633>

Agora of Athens, its state has been documented in several key periods of history and there is a clear record of how it adapted as the city became more complex. Looking at the evolution of the Greek agora helps us understand the role of the marketplace through the passing of time from an informal space into a very structured system that became part of the city and of the civic life of the people. I constantly address the importance of the “civic” quality of the market because for me this is the most important value that needs to be always taken into account when designing a project that involves the public realm, places that gather people in a space created to promote interaction have to provide the correct atmosphere for these situations to occur. “They (marketplaces) are flexible spatial and temporal organizations that produce vivid and inclusive public spaces. As sites of interactions of flows of people, goods and information, markets facilitate a spontaneous synergy of people and communities, which is at the core of everyday life of the city.”⁵

The agora is the perfect example of this formal organization of the market into an inclusive space, and is the starting point of many reforms throughout the centuries that further developed the structure and complexity of the marketplace.

⁵ Janssens, F., & Sezer, C. (2013) P. 169. Marketplaces as an Urban Development Strategy. Built Environment. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/i40130876>

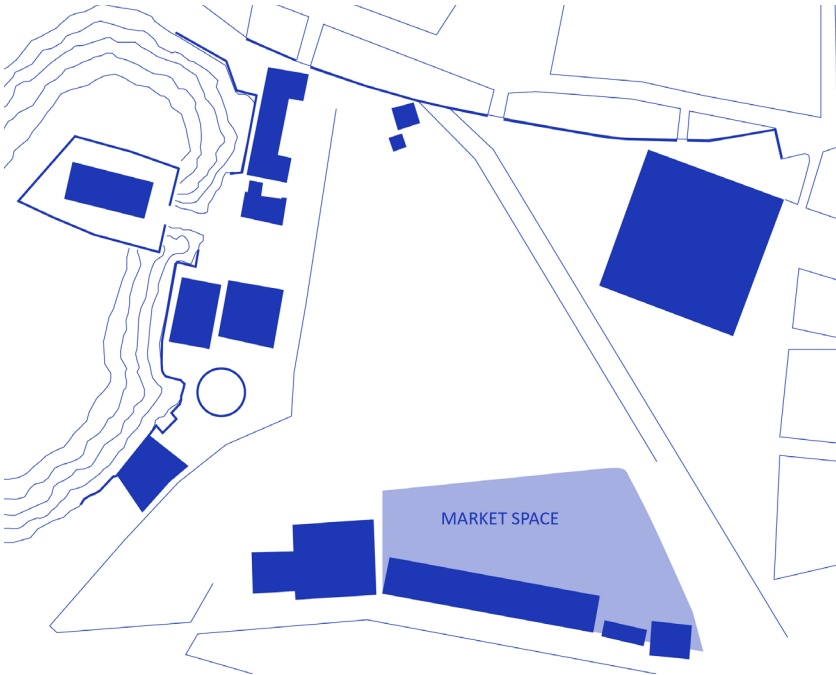


Fig.5. Agora of Athens 200 B.C.

The agora space in the period 200 B.C. consisted mainly on empty space, buildings were arranged in the perimeter and the center was left as a huge multipurpose square. The market space, which at this time was in its majority exterior, had little boundaries and was not strictly defined by the built environment, it worked as a changing space in scale and form according to the needs of the current time. Here we see no intention of creating a relationship between structures, it is more what is left over after important buildings were constructed and the public space lacks complex interconnection.

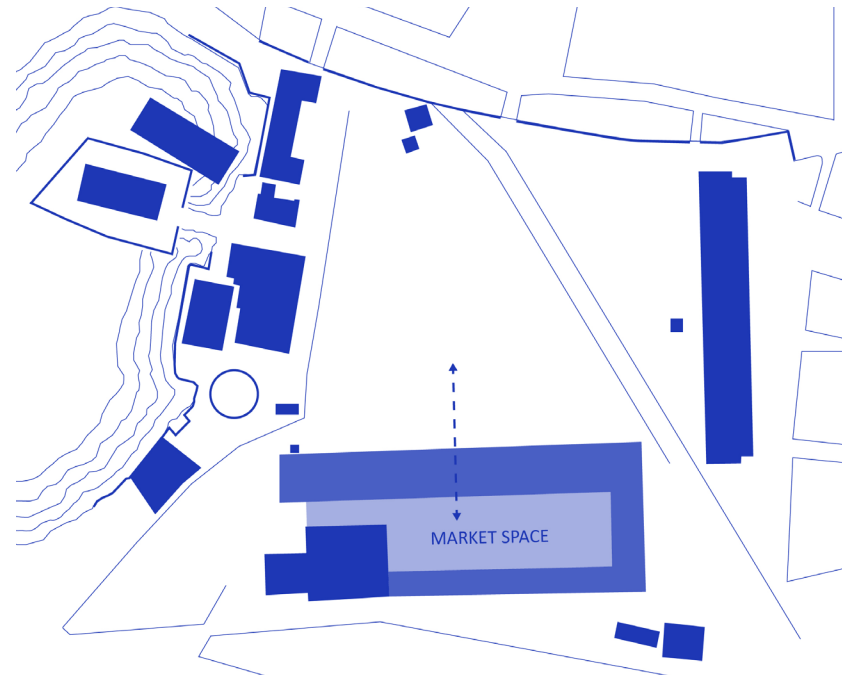


Fig.6. Agora of Athens 100 B.C.

By 100 B.C. there is a clearer view of the market as a defined space, in this plan a new structure in the market space appears which corresponds to the gateway between the open market and the rest of the agora. Even more important, a specific building designated for the market creates an intentional relationship between inside and outside, it serves as a filter that delimits spaces more clearly. The definition of these limits makes possible the zoning of the agora for organizational and use purposes, and articulates the building with the surrounding public space.

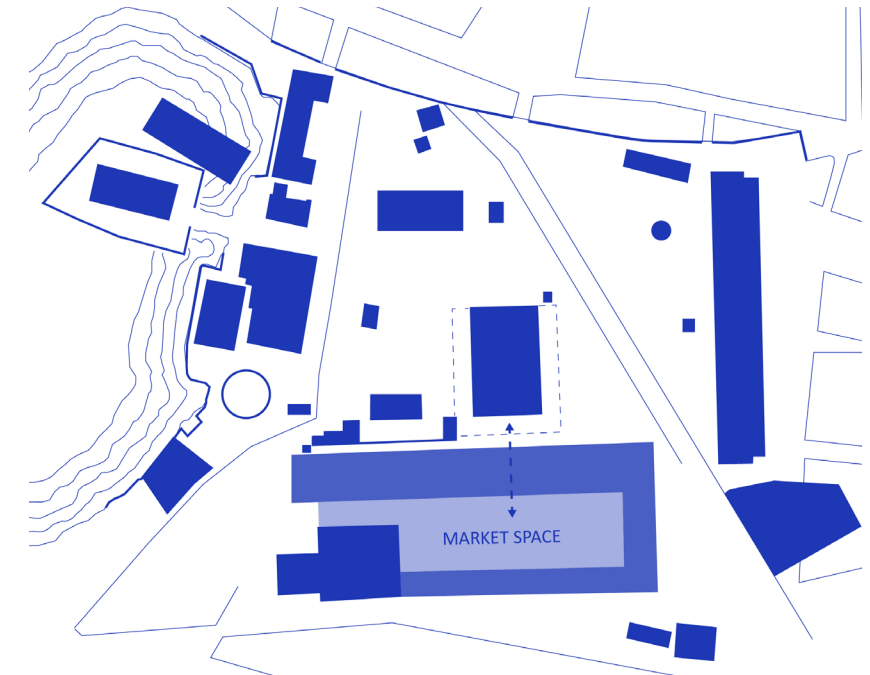


Fig.7. Agora of Athens 200 A.D.

The final plan from 200 A.D. shows a much more complex agora space, the buildings no longer refrain to the perimeters but are also incorporated into the central open space. The relationship between the market space and the new temple in front of it becomes crucial, as the latter serves as an entrance space to the former. Besides the delimitation of functions here also appears an urban intention of relating public space through promenades or intentional pathways, the market then becomes a fixed piece of a system that works in coherence as a whole.

1.3 ARRIVAL OF MODERNITY. THE SUPERMARKET



Fig.8. Supermarkets! Illustration from Flashbak.

“Pile the goods high and sell them cheap.
Let the buyer do the work.
Maintain a market day atmosphere all the time”
(Alpha Beta Stores slogans)



Fig.9. Big Bear Supermarket 1950s. Photo by Brett Streutker.

The supermarket is a place deeply rooted in the everyday life of many, we spend much of our time shopping here for groceries and other goods and it is the first place most of us recur when we need to get our food. The arrival of the supermarket set a turning point in the way people approach shopping, it made such a strong impact that it is now something inseparable from our social structure. The opportunity to get goods that are all collected in the same place with an exuberating variety and enormous quantity sounds definitely appealing to practical living.

The first supermarket as such opened in the United States after the Depression out of a need to sell quickly and in great volume; “Big Bear” opened in the site of an abandoned manufacturing plant and quickly became news that traveled the whole world. “In December, 1932, the food world was startled to read that a huge circus-like retail store had opened up under the name of Big Bear in the abandoned plant of the Durant Motor Car Company in Elizabeth, N.J. People by the thousands flocked from a radius of forty and fifty miles away...”⁶ This scale of store was never seen before, until now markets had been the main sources of daily produce for people and suddenly a

⁶ M.M. Zimmerman cited in Ch. 7 P. 135 of Bowlby, R. (2001). Carried Away. The Invention of Modern Shopping. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/bowl12274.9>

superstore arrived offering everything in one place. The model set by Big Bear was quickly incorporated across the world and the supermarket became the new model of efficient and modern shopping.

The concept of “mass display”⁷ is one of the most influential characteristics of the supermarket, it implies that quantity is key in order to obtain the most profit. Quickly there is a shift from a small to medium scale of the market, with personal interaction between seller and shopper, into a self-serving structure where placing massive amounts of product was the number one strategy to attract as many customers as possible. Piling items and selling the cheap was the new way, it meant standardizing the operational work of the supermarket in order to minimize effort and produce more profit, and at the same time this allowed the customer to acquire an unprecedented freedom that the marketplace could not provide. “There is a childish element in this. No limits are placed on customers’ desires; they can pick up anything they see, and stay for as long as they like. The ‘circus-like’ scene and the name itself tend to a kind of happy infantilization for everyone.”⁸ Making the customer feel as protagonist of the experience and providing “freedom” of choice, which of course we now know that this freedom is very subjective as there are many strategies to influence the way we buy. The supermarket introduces a new way of reaching people with merchandising and information in very effective channels, it works as a giant box filled with opportunities to make profit.

Now don’t get me wrong, I understand the importance of the supermarket in our contemporary life and am aware that its appearance was part of the necessary evolution and the increasing demand of the economy. The need for faster and more efficient ways of living is always a catalyst that continues to drive society forward into new solutions for making daily activities easier, such as grocery shopping. But the supermarket came with full force and it quickly lost many of the great qualities that the traditional market offered in order to gain as much profit and influence as possible. The case of Barcelona is a very exemplary one because many traditional markets still remain operational and are part of daily life, they work in parallel to the supermarket in the sense that they both attract people, but a common denominator that I have

⁷ Introduced by M.M. Zimmerman when referring to the supermarket.

⁸ Bowlby, R. (2001). P. 136 Carried Away. The Invention of Modern Shopping. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/bowl12274.9>



Fig.10. Mercat del Ninot, Barcelona. Photo by Crónica Global.

seen is that many of the traditional markets have adopted the supermarket as a way to stay current. This means that the market has not enough force to attract enough customers on its own, and so it needs the aid of the supermarket to compensate; this results in the typical situation of a market that works in a traditional manner at its ground floor but in the lower floor a supermarket is constructed. The problem here is that the operation of these two parts is not symbiotic, the market operates in one layer and the supermarket in another, they do not really interact as much as they only share a common building plot. In Spain this strategy has been backed up by the government under the argument that when having both uses there is a larger flow of people and therefore more costumers, but a reality is that many of the fresh ingredients that were once bought in markets are now being overtaken by the supermarket offer; this is due to the possibility of mass acquisition of goods possible for large enterprises as well as a lower quality of the general product. “According to the food intake report by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing, and Nutrition, in 2018 the specialized markets sold 30.8% in this category (fresh ingredients), but the supermarkets outnumbered

this quantity with 36.7%”.⁹ The market cannot compete with the prices set by the superstores and so it is gradually losing its place as a main source of ingredients for people.

What is important to realize is that even if there is a need to have a more efficient and cheap system that delivers products to the citizens, the structure of the supermarket rarely offers possibilities of space that generates community. The civic quality of the market has been replaced by a machine of supply that has become automated, almost no human interaction is needed in order to get the products, and this is weakening the social characteristic that was previously typical of a marketplace environment. Here lies the necessity for the market to become something more, only by incorporating the contemporary lifestyle can it keep its relevance not just as a source for better ingredients, but also as the enhancement of the public space.

⁹ Ledo, S. (2019, June 29). Los productos frescos ya salen más del súper que del mercado. El Periódico. Retrieved from <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/economia/20190629/los-productos-frescos-ya-salen-mas-del-super-que-del-mercado-7527302>

1.4 RECLAIMING A ROMANTIC IDEA. THE CONTEMPORARY MARKET



Fig.11. Santa Caterina Market by EMBT. Photo by author.

“... facing a new commercial revolution, the traditional markets offer assets worth considering. Increasingly the sphere of consumerism is getting filled with leisure and experience oriented activities. The face to face environment of the market can offer more varied experiences, richer and more authentic than other more generic formats... The markets can combine better the past with new habits and approaches to urban multiculturalism”
(M. Guardia / J. Oyón)

It seems that nowadays experience is a key factor of the retail environment, whether it is of a clothing store or a grocery market there must be an additional value for the action of going shopping other than just getting the product we seek. For me this represents the way our contemporary environment behaves, providing us with more possibilities and stimulation in order to give more meaning to what we do. Now this is a complicated situation, because in one hand it is true that these experiences do enhance our daily chores and in a way provide us with a wider variety of motivating factors, but it is at the same time a powerful marketing tool with which companies can influence buyers to their advantage. I think the key lies in the middle, the realization that consumerism has always been a part of life in one way or the other and the acceptance that it probably will stay so in the future, and by acknowledging this we can propose spaces that truly provide a better platform for life to develop.

The contemporary marketplace has the potential to become one of these articulating spaces, it offers the most basic needs such as food and necessities, it can have a strong relationship with public space and community, and it can incorporate other programs that integrate into a system that allows inclusion. I mentioned the agora before as a place of civic encounter, which provided spaces for the citizens to thrive and interact in community, but for the needs of today it falls short because now we demand more stimulation, more density and diversity that can satisfy our varied interests. The supermarket introduced the idea of a tailored experience for buying, and it was a natural evolution of shopping that adapted to the demand for more, in this way it has become a crucial model for almost everything we do. The way we relate to a market somewhat already introduces the idea of an enriched experience, taking the case of Barcelona as an example, most of the marketplaces in the city are very iconic buildings that stand out among the rest. Going into a market building is stimulating both visually and spatially, unlike the supermarkets these buildings offer historical value and often much more complex designs, these aesthetics alone already interact more with the visitor in a sensorial way. The way the marketplace relates to the street and its surroundings provides for a deeper connection between outside and inside and enables the generation of public space. The market buildings often incorporate plazas or open spaces that serve as transition from the streets into the shopping areas, these places become ground for other activities not always related to buying goods. All these qualities contribute to the idea of an urban multiculturalism that can include



Fig.12. Santa Caterina Market by EMBT. Photo by author.

successful concepts of the past into our new contemporary reality. This is not just a spatial issue where there is a need to always include open public spaces and create a physical relationship between building and street, it is also a very programmatic approach to architecture and planning. The incorporation of different uses must be a common denominator of the contemporary space, some may be in more direct contact with each other than others, but always present as a system in itself.

A good example of multiculturalism is the Santa Caterina Market by Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue. In one way the building is deeply rooted to a historic thread that gives a special meaning to the place and the structure as a testimony of time, and in another it represents the notion of recovering important ideas of the past and incorporating new notions in order to provide richer environments. “The superposition of different moments in time presents the show of possibilities; it gives a chance to the variations games... Our project starts by criticizing the actual planning and proposes a model that allows for adaptation to the places’ complexity.”¹⁰ The different moments

¹⁰ Interview with Enric Miralles on Barba, J.J. (2014, March 07). SANTA CATERINA MARKET BY EMBT.

in time can also be interpreted as different realities happening simultaneously, the market is located in a historical site in one of the first neighborhoods of Barcelona, which corresponded to the lower working class. For many years this area was the home to a very humble community of citizens and was left outside the plan for modernizing Barcelona. The decision to rehabilitate the old building into a new market that was to become a new icon for the city came with the need to mediate between two very different worlds, and so the project needed to be able to adapt to these multiple realities in the effort of including rather than segregating. The market becomes the articulator between the main exterior shopping axis that links to the new city and the back streets that are more intimately related to the old neighborhood. The Santa Caterina proposal also incorporates housing into the mix, the apartments in this case are destined for affordable housing for the elderly, the addition of a programmatic function other than the commercial allows for the generation of more activity in diverse layers. The result is a mix between heavy commercial activity that provides a new center for the area and private residential zones that bring a sense of community and attachment to the site; the public space is shared between the people who live there and the people who visit, it is not divided by physical barriers that determine its use but rather allows for free interpretation.

The new approach to the design of a market can enhance space with the incorporation of notions such as the ones in Santa Caterina, it is a good effort in proposing a dialogue between different realities while still maintaining its main function of providing goods. I still think the contemporary marketplace can go beyond and stretch its reach into more diversity, not only introduce one alternative use but be able to propose a whole organism composed of very different but complementary parts.

CHAPTER 2. PUBLIC SPACE

REDEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY

Life



Space



Buildings



Fig.13.Life, Space, Buildings Diagram. By Gehl Studio.

“Throughout history city space has functioned as a meeting place on many levels for city dwellers. People met, exchanged news , made deals, arrange marriages - street artists entertained and goods were offered for sale. People attended city events large and small. Processions were held, power was manifested, parties and punishments held publicly - everything was carried put in full public view . The city was the meeting place.”
(J. Gehl)

It would be unwise to talk about the market as a place of civic interaction without diving into some concepts of public space which, at least for me, are crucial both to the understanding of the importance of these places as platforms of community and to set the base for my market proposal.

First I will borrow some concepts presented by the urban planner Manuel Sola Morales that reflect his particular view on what is called “urban acupuncture”, a notion that quickly became clear to me as key in the development of my approach. Then we shift into the questioning of public space and its realms of public and private, which nowadays are much more difficult to define than in the past. What is public and what is private? Does it even matter? And finally there is a need to refer to the design of the periphery, a part of the city many times neglected but that has a huge potential often neglected, in the specific case of Barcelona it becomes an opportunity for new possibilities of growth and connection, and crucial in the development of new projects that take advantage of this privileged situation.

2.1 URBAN ACUPUNCTURE. STRATEGIC PROJECT

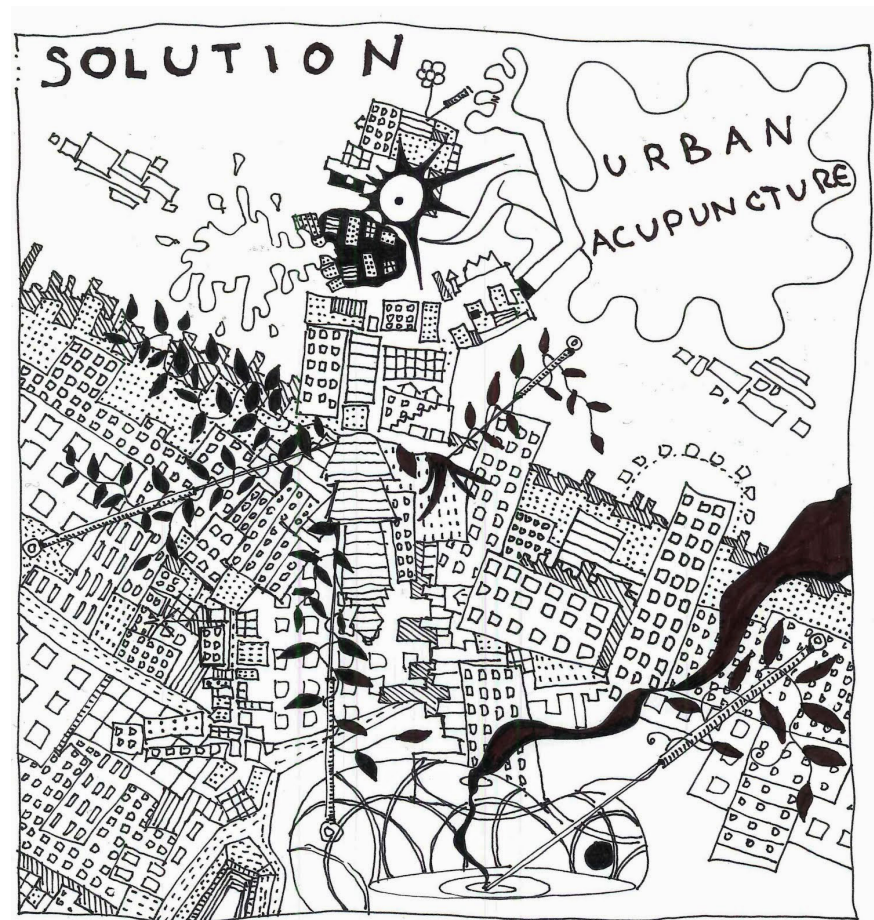


Fig.14. Urban Acupuncture, Hong Kong Biennale 2012. By Traktorfan.

“...the localization of the sensitive spot is the first step in the strategic treatment of the urban skin. The success in the identification of the place and the channels of influence in the tissue will allow the introduction of a new quality, the incorporation of a new energy, cold or hot, potentiate urban quality in its diverse ways.”
(M. Sola Morales)

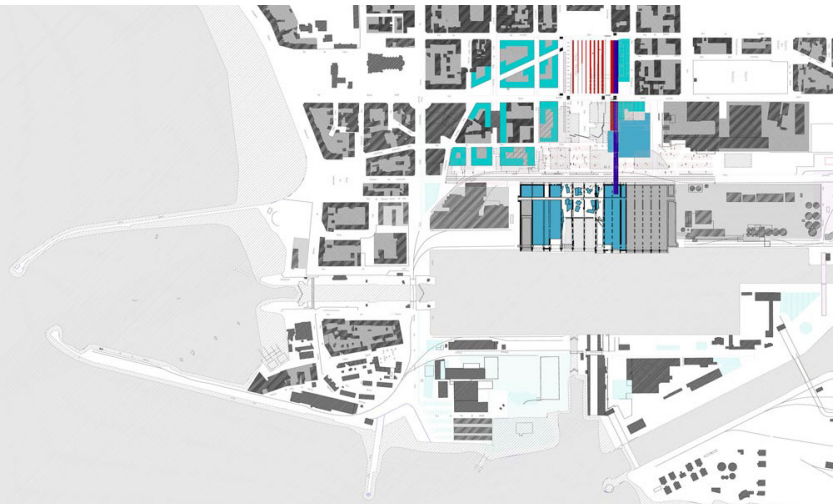


Fig.15. Saint-Nazaire master plan. By Manuel Sola Morales.

Urban acupuncture, in strict terms, refers to the small-scale intervention on a specific point of the city that becomes strategic in generating change or providing a considerable improvement in the urban space. “The term first appeared in the writings of Manuel Sola Morales in reference to reparative interventions in Barcelona and has subsequently been adopted by other architects...”¹ But more than being defined by scale, I think their importance relies on the architect’s ability to detect a strategic point where an intervention is necessary in order to generate new opportunities for a site. The urban project must understand what is needed in the specific site and take advantage of the possibilities that area has to offer, being important pre-existing buildings, connection to other city sectors, or possible new public spaces. “The scale of the project does not lie in the size of the work, but in the relationships that it is capable of generating. Scale, let’s repeat, is a relative measure, a proportion of the transformations that we propose for the impact on the general urban structure, the comprehension of the whole built environment.”²

1 Deyong, S. (2011). P. 98 Urban Acupuncture and the Paradoxical Logic of Systems. Journal of Writing Building, 13, 98–99. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24329286>

2 Sola Morales, Manuel. P.76 De Cosas Urbanas. Editorial Gustavo Gilli, 2008.

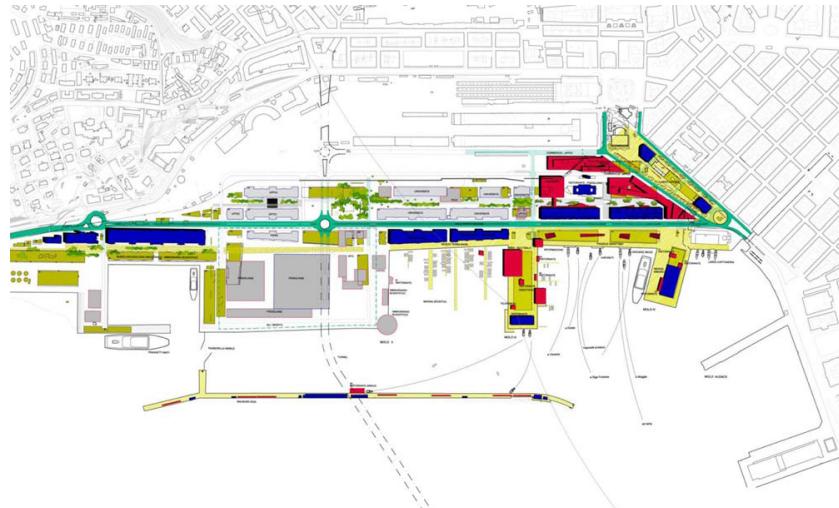


Fig.16. Porto Vecchio master plan. By Manuel Sola Morales

Two projects that Sola Morales uses to explain a strategical approach to an urban problem are Saint-Nazaire and Trieste. While they vary greatly in the requirements of the space and their situation, both rely on the identification of a specific methodology that sets course for a gradual transformation of the city.

Saint-Nazaire deals with the “historic lack of a fluid relationship” between the town and the ports around it, which was caused by the state of the urban fabric after the WWII bombings, the project aims to reconnect the city through a series of intentional interventions on the public space in order to establish links. It is not small in scale and it incorporates the modification of a large area in order to be strong enough so that it manages to truly transform the area, but at the same time it does not introduce more than is needed, it methodically analyses what is only necessary. Trieste similarly deals with an industrial sector of the city that has become a barrier, but its approach is not mainly about connecting but more about bringing life back to a historic part of the city, the harbour; it generates a promenade of different urban uses (commercial, leisure, etc.) An important element in this proposal is that it sets a language of change that is left open for continuous growth of the public space; instead of having a complete

and rigid plan, the project plants the seeds for future possibilities within the site that further strengthen the urban fabric.

The marketplace has been since its beginnings a strong acupuncture project, it has been used to create new city centers and bring life to specific strategic areas of connection and trade. Regardless of its physical scale, its impact on the city goes beyond architecture or urban planning, it also influences economical and political entities; with the appearance of the market the way of living changed radically, and it all started by simply deciding to establish a particular place for this chain reaction to happen. “We capture the quality of the marketplaces within the terms of “public space”. Marketplaces, we argue, have the potential to turn open space - a street, a square, a parking lot - into public space; in other words, marketplaces activate public space”³

³ Janssens, F., & Sezer, C. (2013). P. 246 Marketplaces as an Urban Development Strategy. Built Environment.

Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/i40130876>

2.2 PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLIC SPACE?



Fig.17.Art Monaco Portland via parking day.org

“It seemed a splendid idea. Developers wanted to put up buildings as big as they could. Why not harness their avarice? Planners saw a way. First, they would downzone. They would lower the limit on the amount of bulk a developer could put up. Then they would upzone, with strings. The builders could build over the limit if they provided a public plaza, or an arcade, or a comparable amenity” (W. Whyte)

There is a constant debate on whether public spaces should be privately or publicly owned. The proposal of a new marketplace is to provide the city and neighborhood with new possibilities for life and development of community, this must address the question of to what extent should the project incorporate the development of public space through the private initiative and if this approach would be beneficial to the whole. The reality exists that this project is monumental in size and cost and it considers the development of a big area, and so it is natural that some of said development will be passed on to the private sector in order to finance building.

There is a concept called “bonus space”, in which developers are encouraged to build more total construction meters as long as they provide the city with spaces for public access. This strategy allows for the construction of quality and competitive equipment that has to accommodate spaces for the city; the trick is to ensure that this bonus space actually offers an environment in which citizens can thrive, and not just open space with low quality urban design. “As public-private partnerships are the model for catalysing urban (re)development, bonus space is an increasingly common land use type in most major cities...”⁴ The implementation of such bonus spaces gives the possibility to follow a bigger plan for the growth of the urban environment within controlled boundaries that ensure the interconnection of the city. This means that a master plan can be implemented in sections, where according to the defined rules set a network of public space can be established that serves in conjunction with private uses, each enhancing the other. Some authors disagree with this approach because according to them it is easy for developers to find ways of cutting corners and doing as little as possible while still generating the most profit; and this is the case in many projects where there is no clear plan involved in protecting the urban context. “This process involves speculation on land and rent value in previously divested parts of the city; and frequently displaces those in society with the least voice to protest.”⁵ This is certainly true in some cases, but there are other initiatives where there is an actual dialogue between the public and private realms, and where the city is enriched by a project that manages to include both.

4 Balsas, C. (2020). The role of public markets in urban habitability and competitiveness. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 13(1), 30–46.

5 Slater quoted in: Filipi, J. (n.d.). Privatized Transformation of Public Space: Construction of a Marketplace through the Cooptation of a Public Space by Private Enterprise and the Aesthetic of Exclusion/Inclusion. *Built Environment*, 39(2), 237.



Fig.18. L'Illa Diagonal. Project by Manuel Sola Morales and Rafael Moneo. Photo by Michael Moran.

A particular case in Barcelona is L'Illa Diagonal, where there is an incorporation of quality public space into a mix of commerce and office uses. The project merges a dense commercial and office program into a building that generates activity for the city beyond the need for buying or necessarily working there; it is an understanding of how a building inserts itself into the urban context and becomes an extension of it. L'Illa Diagonal takes profound consideration of its surroundings in order to ensure symbiosis between public and private. Even when the building is monumental in size, the architects take care of proportion and volume layout, including many open spaces for the free use of the citizens. While the funding for the project comes from private parties, the city is gaining much quality public areas. "The private initiative, under the tutelage of the city council planning, took the final decision: the project by architects Rafael Moneo and Manuel Sola Morales was chosen in the award resolution. It materialized, thus, in some plans, the pact between the private initiative and the interests of the city."⁶

⁶ Badia, M. (1995). L'Illa-Diagonal: La materialització urbanística d'un projecte comercial. Espais. Revista Del Departament De Política Territorial I Obres Públiques.

The project generates a multicultural environment, where through introducing different programs into a dense structure it allows for intense activity and offer of work and leisure alike.

What L'Illa Diagonal brings to the table is a correct mix between involved parties and particular interests. The project would have been very different if it only considered a public plaza or open park, or on the other hand an enclosed shopping mall that took up all the allowed square meters for its construction. A balance is met where the middle is best, both worlds offer good qualities that make better architecture and better public space for the city. This may not be the case for every development that appears, and it does not mean that developing public space through the private initiative is the only way of making quality equipment, but it does provide a perfect example of how smart alliances and correct planning can provide a beneficial result for everyone.

Translated to the contemporary marketplace the same ideas can be applied. The incorporation of commerce in conjunction with the mixed-use environment calls for projects big in scale and urban impact. From the beginning, bonus spaces must be considered not as opportunities for each building, but as a system that allows a complete reorganization of space in favour of city and neighborhood connection. Through the private initiative there can be a heavy influx of resources and quality can be guaranteed, and with the proper guidance from city planners there can be a reassurance that the overall course of the development goes according to the generation of new communal spaces.

2.3 PROJECTING THE PERIPHERY



Fig.19.Dvorulitsa Project by Meganom. Urban periphery project.

“The strength of the place is, in the periphery, the absence of place in the classical sense, meaning the absence of the set determinations by the history of locus. And that which peripheral places evoke is, not just in the images of the expecting void, but mostly on the sense of indifference toward the position of things.”
(M. Sola Morales)

Manuel Sola Morales refers to the periphery as a canvass of opportunity instead of as residual spaces outside of vibrant cities, rather than dealing with them as places to locate the unwanted services and infrastructures that a city needs to properly function, he defends the idea that they can become new sub centers of the contemporary metropolis. What the periphery has that other central areas lack is space, area to grow and transform without many of the bounds set by the already defined environment, and these liberties allow for the creation of new realities that can then be linked to the whole. The peripheral areas have qualities of their own that are more or less independent from those in the center and this can be used as an advantage when approaching the proposal of a new project. They can provide with new ways of living the same city in a different environment and have their own set of guidelines that can be taken to arrange neighborhoods, blocks or specific sites. This open relationship is very important because in the end each part of a city must have its own identity, and together they can form a complete image of a diverse system that can allocate different ways of living.

One of the most important considerations needed when dealing with a project in the periphery is that of the “interesting distance”. The periphery may be a blank canvass for new projects to propose new realities but it must always consider the livable space at the human and not just at the urban scale. “There is a distancing system that organizes the layout and constructs the logic hidden in the occupation of territory ...”⁷ This logic is not random or casual, it responds to whatever elements already dictate the possible organization of space, and in some cases it calls for understanding when to build and when to leave the space empty. This for me is key in order to understand the value of projecting the periphery, not always construction is the answer, in many parts there must be blank space left for natural evolution with the passing of time; it should not be a rigid and enclosed master plan where everything is already resolved and catalogued, it should rather be the implementation of a set of key projects that provide a starting point for the urban area to grow within the needs of the life it houses.

The new proposal for the marketplace and for the urban plan that links it to the city must be adaptable to these conditions and at the same time provide the correct amount of planning in order to be a successful long term project.

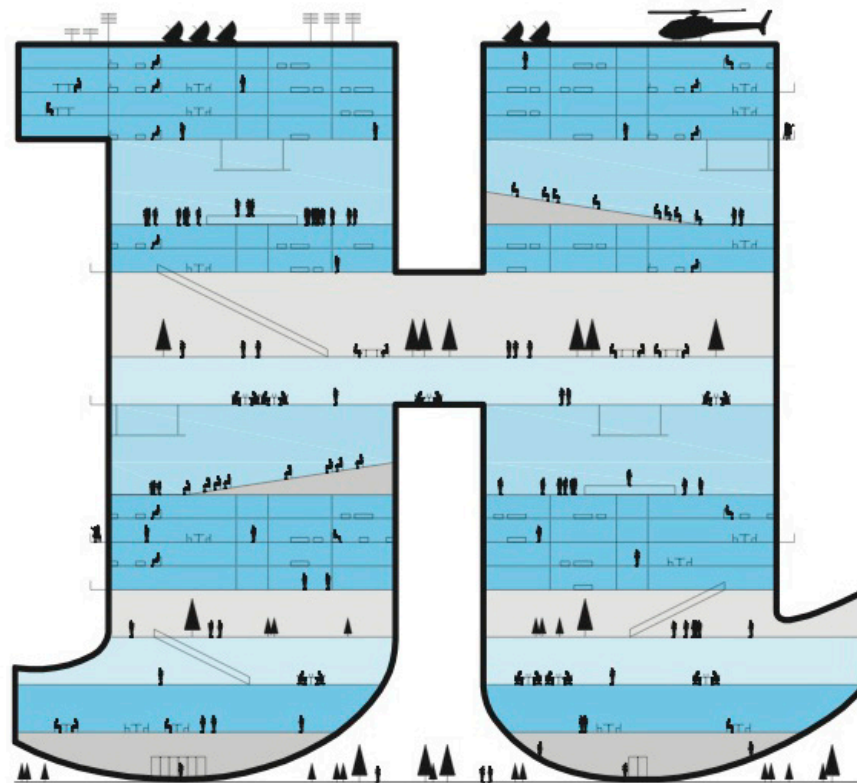
⁷ Sola Morales, Manuel. De Cosas Urbanas. Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2008.

It must first determine , referring back to the concept urban acupuncture, key pressure points for strategic projects to appear, and then a general plan on how to make them work together. It is also fundamental to search for an original character, not aiming to copy what has already been done in other areas of Barcelona but rather seek new approaches to the solution of public space; I am not saying that the previous methods do not work, but to every site there needs to be a different approach, and when referring specifically to the market and the urban space that it generates there needs to be a reconsideration of how the building and the open spaces can be arranged. The periphery cannot be treated the same as the center, all the factors are different, density is much lower, movement is less compact and distances are longer, the solution must consider that the new area of intervention is something that needs to grow with time until it becomes a whole on its own. “In European cities, the symbolic and conventional strength of the traditional centres has reduced, in the past years, the imagination of other urban tissues... The effort of architects and urban planners seems to have followed to close the interests of business and politics towards the recovery of the centralized city.”⁸ The new proposal at an urban scale focuses on connecting the center to the periphery but not as a means to imitate and homologate, it rather identifies the current boundaries of the public realm and stretches them toward new grounds that have the potential to become another sub center in Barcelona.

⁸ Extract from “Proyectar la periferia”. Laboratori D’Urbanisme 1991. Sola Morales, Manuel. P. 167. De Cosas Urbanas. Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2008.

CHAPTER 3. HYBRID TYPOLOGIES.

PRE-EXISTING MODELS FOR NEW REALITIES



This is Hybrid

Fig.20. Book cover for "This is Hybrid. By Alex Ollero.

"If there is to be a "new urbanism"... it will no longer be about meticulous definition, the imposition of limits, but about expanding notions, denying boundaries, not about separating or identifying entities, but about discovering unnamable hybrids..." (R. Koolhaas)

Approaching the contemporary public space is understanding the need of multiplicity, our society is composed of many realities, different but always intertwined. Architecture has to address these realities and translate them into habitable space suitable for everyone, not as separated layers or bubbles, but as a system of exchange where clash is key, the enrichment of the social fabric through providing the possibility of diversity.

Hybrid typologies have been around almost since the beginning of planned space, houses that served as shops on the ground floor, or plazas that incorporated many uses within a single place and became city centers, the first part of this chapter is dedicated to understanding the importance of these typologies and how they enhance public space. Into more specific terms, the second part refers to the building, not as a machine for living as Le Corbusier put it, but as a machine for urbanity, a vessel that allows these exchange of realities within and at the same time connects with the city. Finally the focus on a particular type of hybrid is necessary: the bridge-building, a strategy that becomes fundamental for the flow and connectivity of the urban tissue and a pillar for the bridge-market proposal.

3.1 WHY HYBRID?

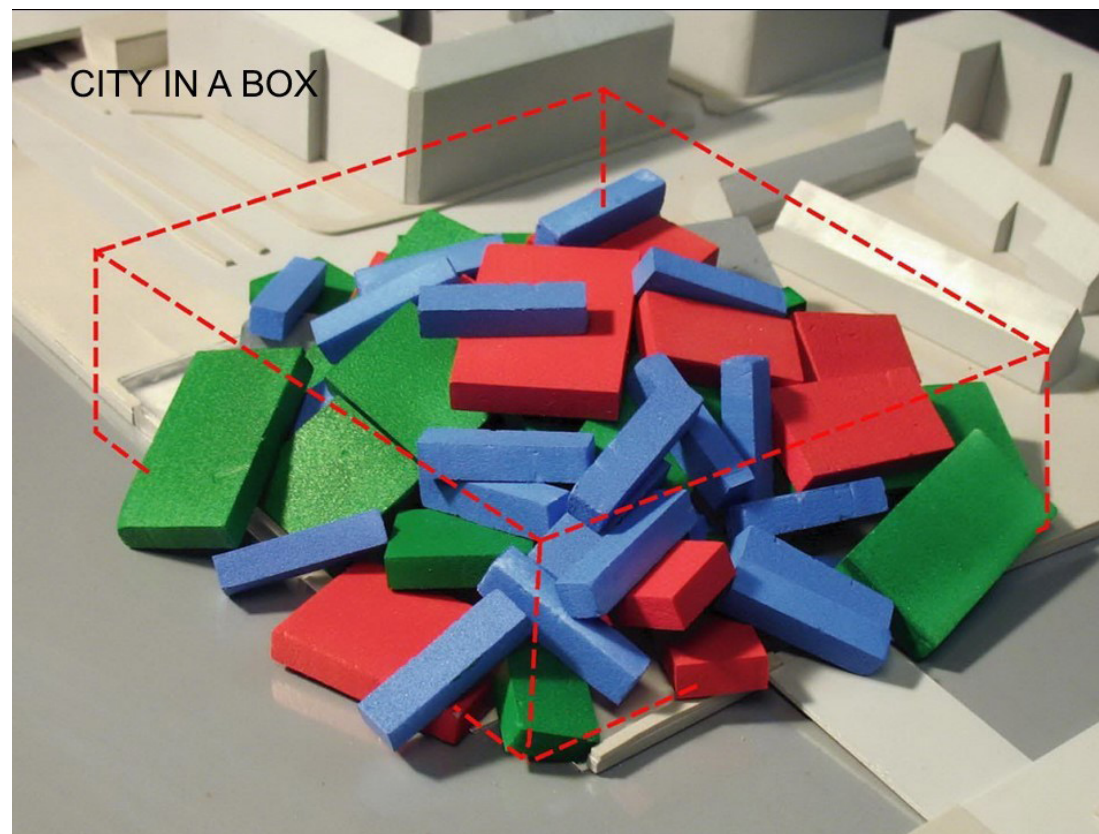


Fig.21. Blox Project conceptual model. By OMA.

The arrival of modern technologies of construction has enabled architects and planners to extend the possibilities of the hybrid typology and truly make it work as a whole. Concrete and steel structures allowed for much larger spans and more open spaces which meant more freedom to arrange different uses according to the specific requirements of each program; an office building requires different structural arrangements than a housing block, and a commercial area much more transparency and permeability to the outside than more private zones. I said before that the hybrid building is not something new, it has been around since the beginning as a part of daily life, but when these new techniques were invented the possibilities for the generation of these huge multipurpose structures rose to a complete new dimension. In our current world there is an increasing need for the optimization of space, lack of land, the desire to save resources, the demand for connectivity and commute, all these factors point out towards the incorporation of the hybrid model as a normal approach to an architectural solution. Our society works as an intertwined network, always connected and in constant communication, this is both a physical reality as it is psychological, the transportation systems and the urban scale connections make it possible to travel more or less freely, the movement of the city has become the main thing that keeps it alive. Our connection in social networks, media and digital information has also made us dependant on the fast transmission of ideas and emotions, this constant influence from the outside world into our lives provides a stimulation like no other before.

The hybrid typology needs to address our current needs for constant communication, and by becoming a platform for diversity and multiculturalism it can provide for improved solutions on pre-existing methods.

3.2 THE BUILDING AS A MACHINE FOR URBANITY

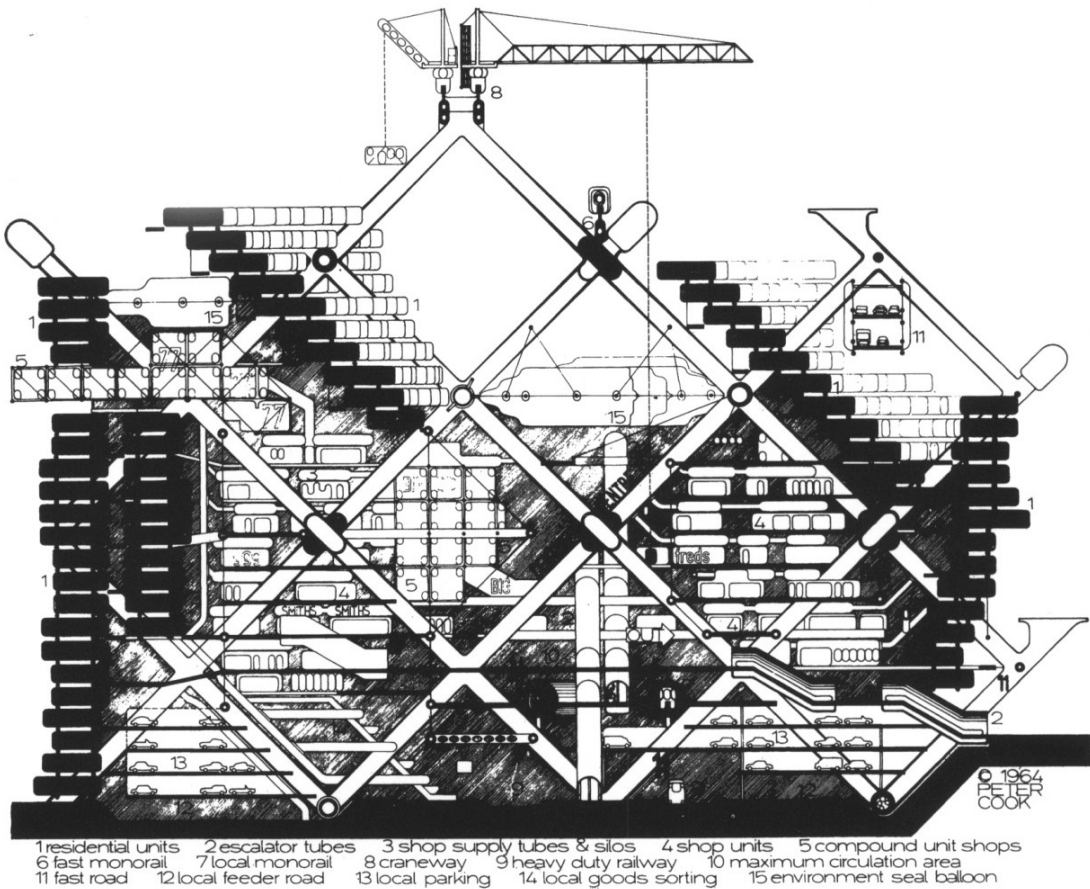


Fig.22. Computer City. By Archigram.

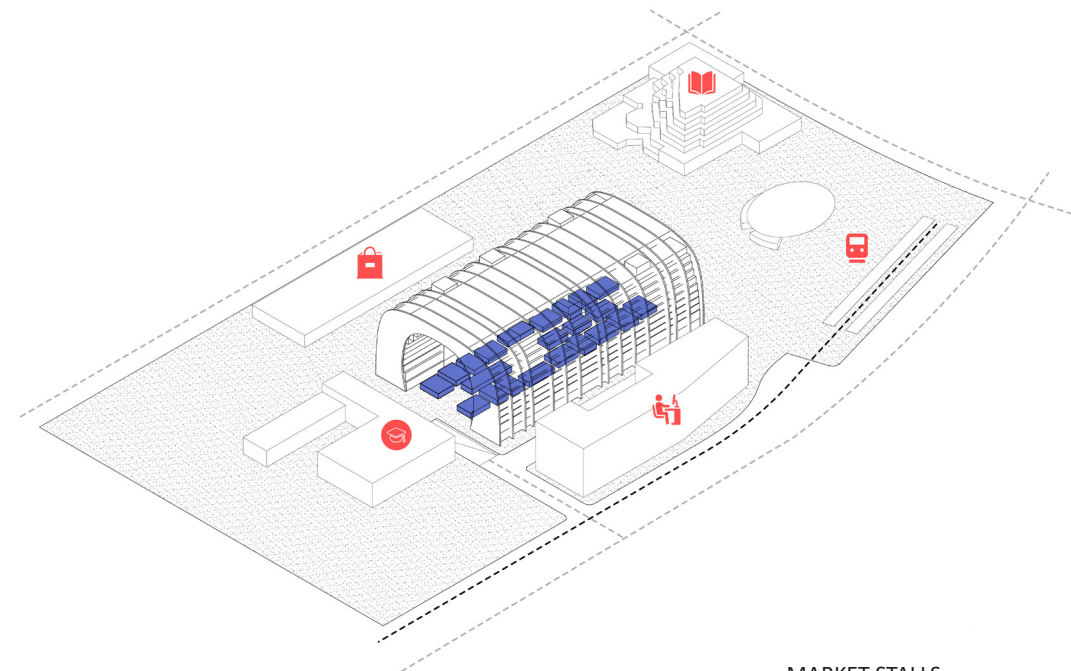
“...the European hybrid building potentially extends the city’s public domain horizontally and vertically into the building’s interior and links the public domain inside and outside. Basically it acts as a city within the city by hosting everyday life, work and leisure for a diversity of city inhabitants and visitors...” (S. Komossa)



Fig.23. Markthal Rotterdam. Project by MDRDV.

Talking about the building as a machine for urbanity is talking about architecture’s potential to generate activity, not only for its inhabitants but for the surrounding city. A building that wants to be an urban machine must have the ability to interact, in any way convenient, with the space around it in order to enhance public space through activity, it must become a hub where the city connects and more importantly provide new services that bring activation to its context. “...the architectural features that establish and articulate the mutual relationship between the public space of the city and the interior of the building including the use of materials and ornament (or the lack of it) are shown, as well the volume and architectural articulation of the public interior within the building volume as a whole.”¹ The importance of the hybrid building does not only lie on the use in its own, it also refers to the ability to articulate different realities and still have a strong identity as a unity. The “Markthal” in Rotterdam by MDRDV is a perfect example of an urban machine, where multiple uses are put together into a system that works simultaneously in different layers and at the same time connects the public space around it.

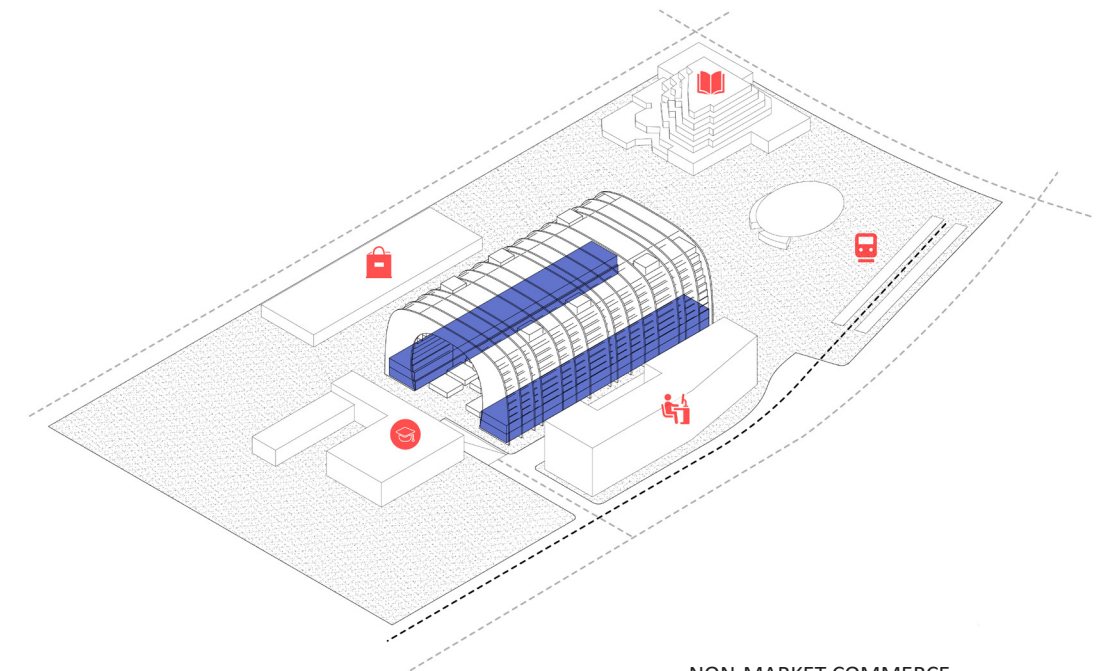
¹ Komossa, S. (2011). Researching and designing GREAT; the extremely condensed hybrid urban block. Revista Lusófona De Arquitectura e Educação, (5). Retrieved from <https://revistas.ulusofoa.pt/index.php/revlae/article/view/2678>



MARKET STALLS

Fig.24. Markthal Rotterdam. Project by MDRDV. Redrawn by Author.

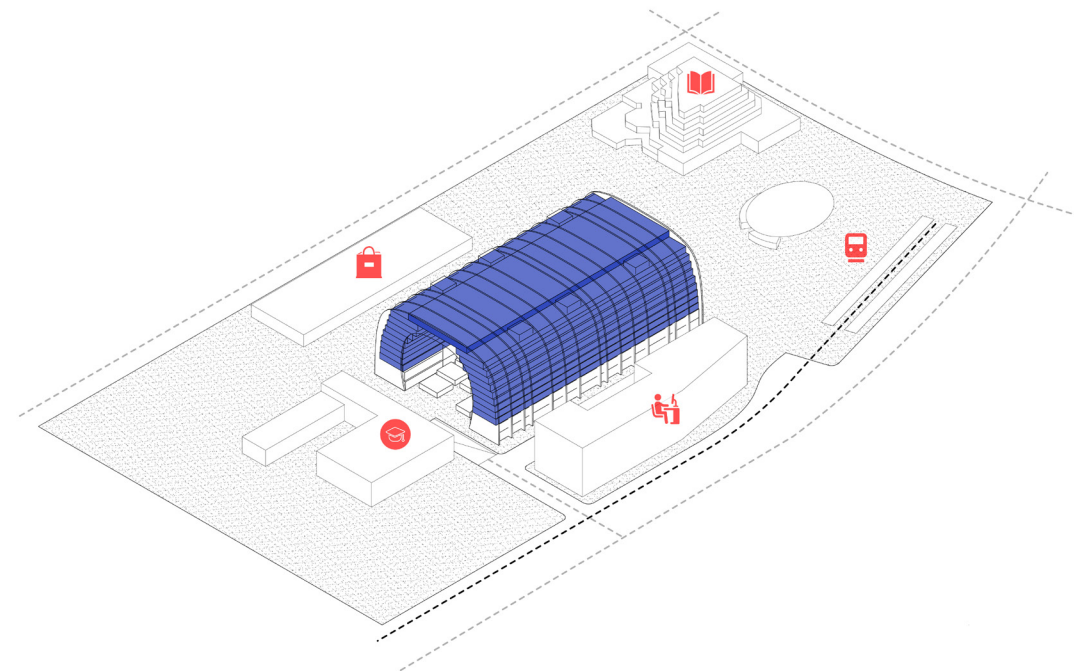
The Markthal building is placed in a growing part of the city, where already several important buildings existed, among them a train station, a library, a shopping street, and a school. I have discussed the importance of mixed-use in order to have an active city, and here the mixed-use space exists prior to the appearance of the new structure, and so with ease the new market takes on these principles as a main concept. The shape of the structure allows it to have a very strong visual and spatial connection to the public space and so creates a seamless link through a huge “tunnel” where the market stalls are located, the flow of public space at the ground floor is for me key for the success of this project as a generator of public space, because it allows the direct connection between outside and inside from as many points of access as possible.



NON-MARKET COMMERCE

Fig.25. Markthal Rotterdam. Project by MDRDV. Redrawn by Author.

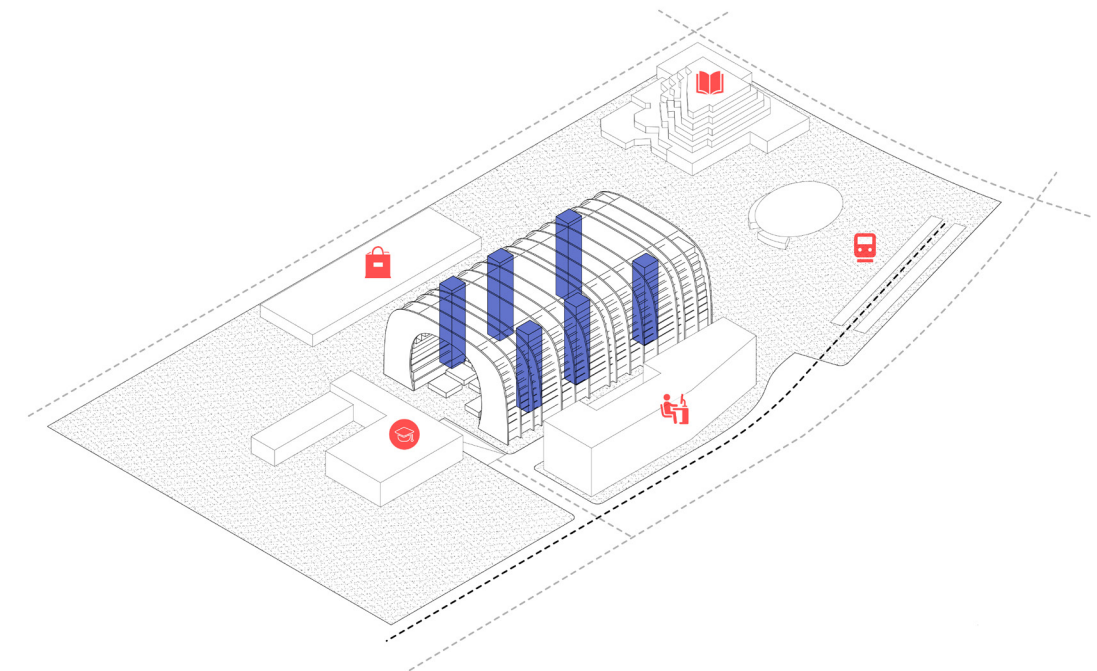
Access to the building is not only possible through the gateways of the arches, there is also a strong permeability on the longer sides where stores of different products are located. By adding different commercial uses apart from the market, activity is increased and the ability to connect grows, these commercial strips serve as transition points that interact both with the outside as well as the inside.



HOUSING

Fig.26. Markthal Rotterdam. Project by MDRDV. Redrawn by Author.

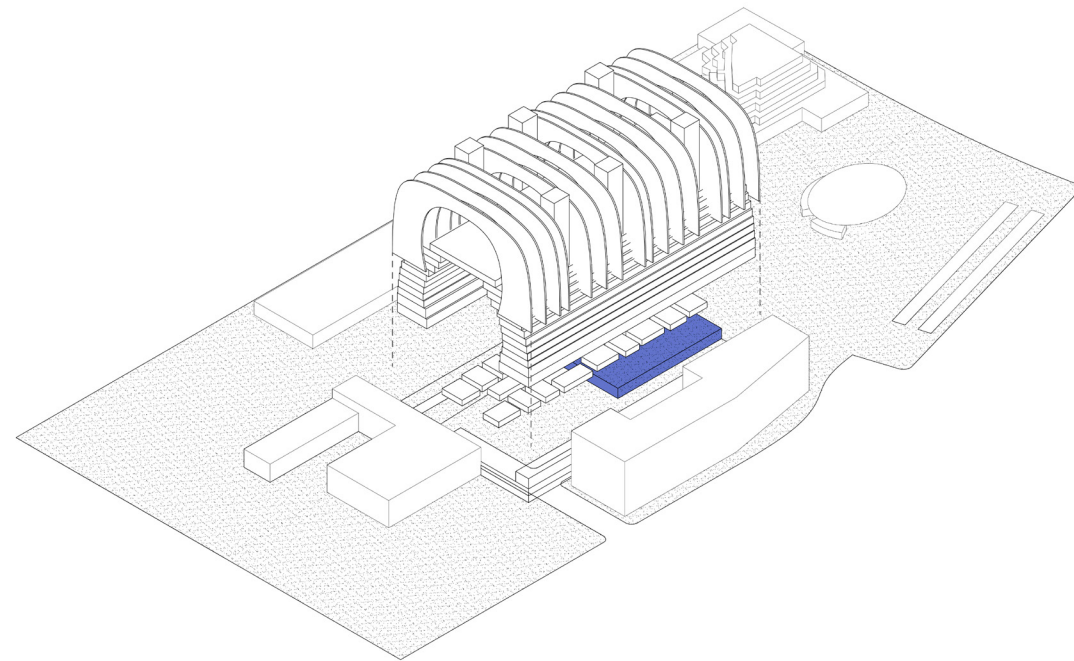
A very special characteristic of this building is that it introduces housing to the equation. The market must evolve in order to survive as a space for contemporary life, and here is an example of that, where living spaces are introduced as the enclosing elements of space. A whole new kind of interaction between market and living is achieved, here the marketplace becomes the center of a whole living complex, serving both to the exterior visitors as well as the residents of the building.



VERTICAL CONNECTION

Fig.27. Markthal Rotterdam. Project by MDRDV. Redrawn by Author.

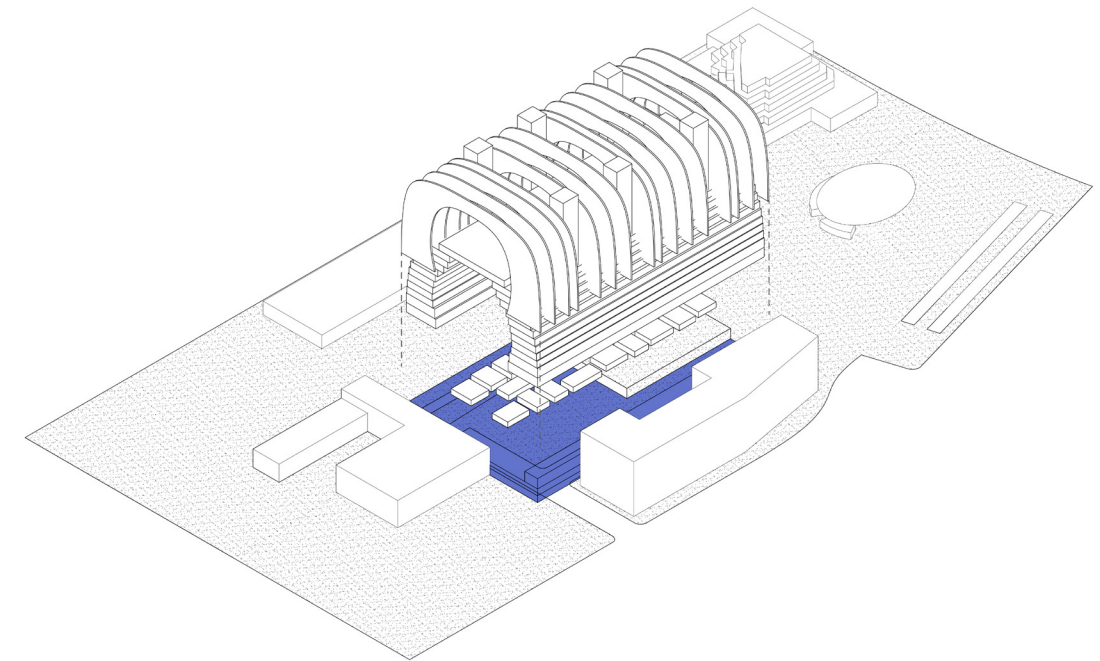
Vertical circulation cores are very traditional in the sense that they do not provide connection of public space but rather serve as separate paths inside the building, this is understandable because even when the goal is to have a diverse program and a strong connectivity of public space, the definition of the boundaries between public and private is important for the practical functionality of the machine. That being said, one factor that for me is lacking in this building is a stronger idea of connectivity between private and public through liveable spaces and not just spaces of transition such as circulation cores, the introduction of the liveable transition space could provide new ways of living inside the hybrid.



UNDERGROUND - SUPERMARKET

Fig.28. Markthal Rotterdam. Project by MDRDV. Redrawn by Author.

I have addressed before the relationship between the supermarket and the more traditional marketplace and how more and more it has become difficult to sustain the conventional ways without the implementation of the contemporary shopping compounds. It is clear that the supermarket is secondary in this project, as is in many other supermarket-marketplace configurations, it is there only to support and attract more people rather than to contribute to the spatial qualities of the environment. Maybe it is naive to think that the marketplace could be as successful on its own, but I think there is much more potential for it to become a hybrid public space than what the supermarket model allows.



UNDERGROUND - PARKING AND SERVICES

Fig.29. Markthal Rotterdam. Project by MDRDV. Redrawn by Author.

The incorporation of underground parking and services allows for the liberation of space on the ground and upper floors; the logistics of the market, supermarket, shops and living spaces can be all carried out underground. It is easier to arrange the space this way in order to have fast access to the stalls when supplies come in and at the same time organize vertical circulations and access to the building from the streets.

3.3 BRIDGE BUILDINGS



Fig.30.Ponte Vecchio. Art by Asbjorn Lonvig.



Fig.31. Milstein Hall. Project by OMA.

When referring to a “bridge-building” OMA’s Milstein Hall is a perfect example of a building that through its structural composition it can become a powerful generator of space. The new addition to the building complex at Cornell University’s department of Architecture manages to bring together the pre-existing and the contemporary, and provide new areas for multidisciplinary use. The intentions of this project are no different than many proposals from Koolhaas: “To generate density, exploit proximity, provoke tension, maximize friction, organize in-betweens, promote filtering, sponsor identity, and stimulate blurring.”² Although these words were meant for a different project, the same notion can be understood when looking at Milstein Hall, where a clear clash is provoked, a new piece is almost forced into the puzzle but in the end it is what actually manages to complete the picture. This is in every sense of the word a hybrid, it takes advantage of the structural capabilities in order to allocate flexibility and configuration and at the same time it remains whole, there is a careful consideration of how the built elements interact with the void that becomes public space.

² Quote from Rem Koolhaas in Davidson, C. (2012). Building Scenarios: Milstein Hall. Log, Fall 2012(26), 41-47.

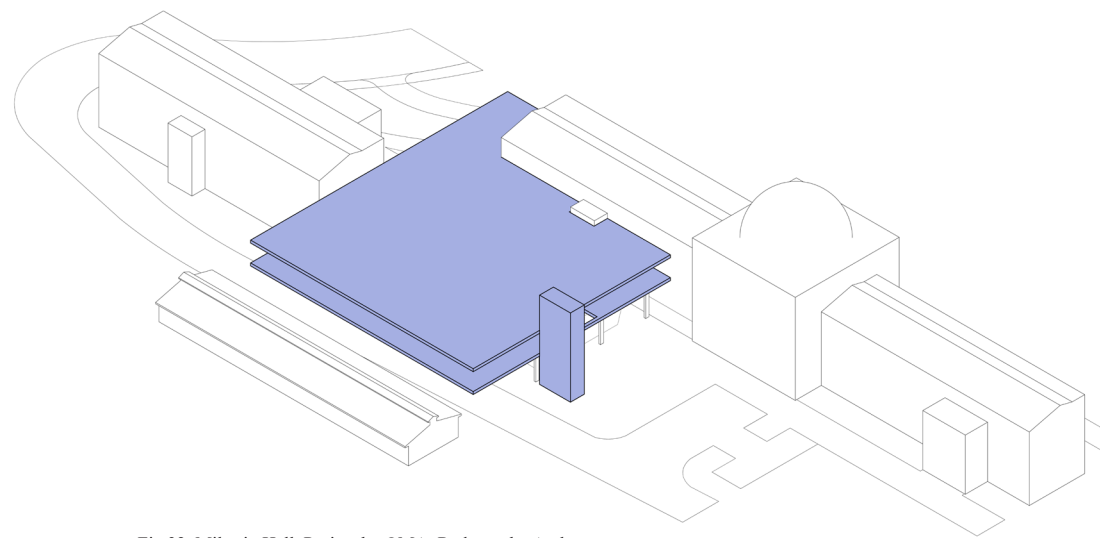


Fig.32. Milstein Hall. Project by OMA. Redrawn by Author.

The structure for the new expansion works as an element that organizes space, it is placed in the open area around the existing buildings and physically fills the void in the middle. This action allows the proposal to take shape naturally due to the limits already set by the context, and it enables the architects to create a network of connection between public space, existing and new, and different programs all in the same building.

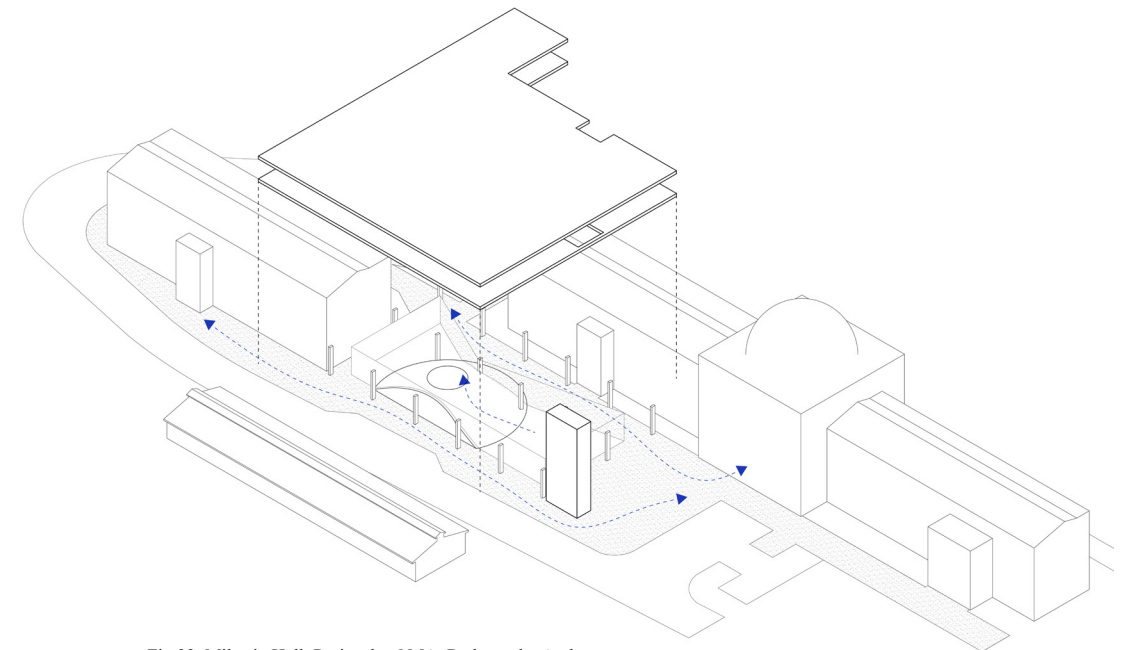


Fig.33. Milstein Hall. Project by OMA. Redrawn by Author.

The structural solution for the proposal makes it possible to eliminate as much elements as possible that block the flow of space both on the ground and upper floor, the building works literally as a bridge that elevates above ground and allows for a dynamic program that connects key areas of the ground floor. The way the elements of the building contribute to the movement allows for different atmospheres in each space, the cover for the auditorium becomes seating on the outside, the glass box brakes in order to provide places to stay.

The choice of a bridge-like building means freedom to arrange space with little interruption, and it also provides effective methods of connecting; this connection can be of open spaces, which in case it turns into a gateway, or it can be a link of pre existing structures on different levels.

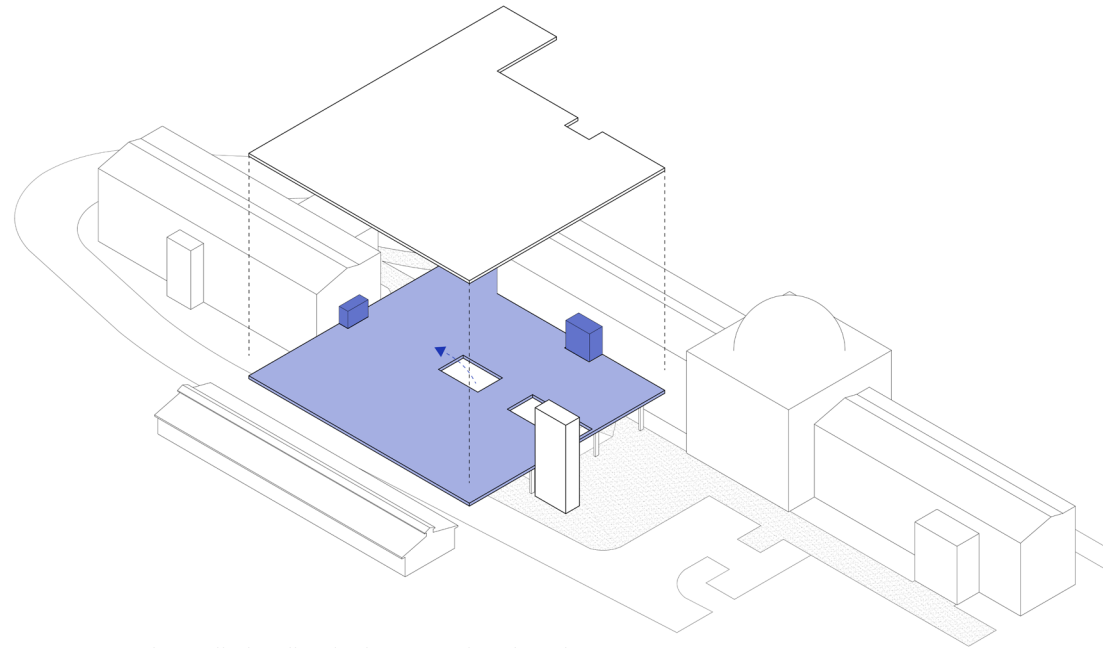


Fig.34. Milstein Hall. Project by OMA. Redrawn by Author.

The upper floor demonstrates the physical connection through the use of the bridge. The workshops serve a multipurpose task, in one hand they consist of completely open and configurable spaces for the students to use and arrange, and in the other it links the two pre existing university buildings through this new space that serves as transitions as well as introduction of program.

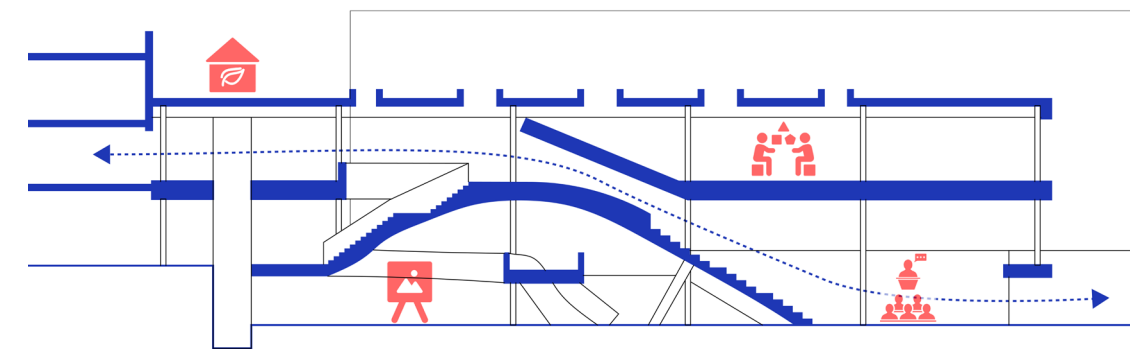


Fig.35. Milstein Hall. Project by OMA. Redrawn by Author.

The layout of the project allows for different programs to be linked together in the same building, thanks to the bridge-like structure the spaces can be arranged with more freedom, the ground floor serves as the link to the more public domain, the lower floor incorporates an auditorium and gallery space, and the top level the multipurpose workshops, even a green terrace on the roof. This is another example of a building that acts as a system from which several parties can thrive, it is not static but rather it can adapt to different scenarios and give the users diversity to inhabit the space. The use of a bridge-like structure can be understood in the section, where clearly the intention is to let the top, middle and bottom to be connected physically connected.

CHAPTER 4. THE BACKYARD OF MONTJUIC.
THE FUTURE OF L'HOSPITALET



Fig.36.Skyscrapers at Sants-Montjuic, Barcelona. Photo by Iakov, taken from PicFair.

I mentioned the periphery before because the market proposal actually is located in a peripheral area in Barcelona. “The backyard of Montjuic” as I like to call it, refers to the area behind the mountain that corresponds to L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, an area that currently functions as an industrial sector as well as for the service of the Fira II hub (hotels, offices, and buildings dedicated solely to the service of the Fira complex).

As many parts of the city, there is an undergoing change in this zone from mainly industrial to mixed-use and residential. The city planners have already seen the potential of this area to become a new sub-center of Barcelona and are betting in many developments of transformation. Marina del Pratt Vermell is one of the main sectors that has already invested in this project, and is the starting point of the urban proposal for the area along the Fira II that aims to connect a current periphery with a very active city center through the Montjuic massif.

4.1 INDUSTRIAL BARCELONA. MARINA DEL PRAT VERMELL



Fig.37. Aereal view Marina del Prat Vermell and Montjuïc area. Taken from Google Maps.

Cities that thrive are constantly changing and re adapting, Barcelona is one example of good urbanism strategies set in motion to promote the growth of a well functioning network of transport and public space that connects the city. But currently it has reached a point where building plots inside the city centre are scarce and developments cannot be planned so freely due to the lack of space, this is when readapting existing sectors comes in handy to revitalize and generate new sub centers for the evolution of the metropolis. The plans for La Marina del Prat Vermell set the starting point of a complete re-configuration of an industrial part of the city that has the potential to be connected to the main network of public space and mixed use developments, this strategy has been used many times before in order to take advantage of what can be preserved and to use it to generate new neighborhoods that provide housing and commerce opportunities. “With a potential of 30,000 inhabitants, it will occupy almost 80 acres of land (equivalent to 40 L’Eixample blocks). The accesibility will be guaranteed by the construction of a new subway line and the Zona Franca passage, beside the construction of a new central park...¹ The Montjuïc massif works as a powerful element that brings character to the city, and it organizes a very important part of Barcelona around it providing access to the mountain and at the same time setting limits for the city to grow in an organized manner. The parts of the city linked to the Northern side of Montjuïc are the most thriving and correspond to the center, these parts have been constantly developed and have become examples of excellency in urban planning. But the areas looking South have been left mostly unattended, corresponding to the industrial harbor area and warehouses, the urban structure of these parts is very weak and does not create any sense of urbanity, something very shocking to see when this sector allocates the biggest convention space of Barcelona right at its core.

The relationship between the Fira 2 and the surrounding neighborhoods is almost non existing, the city ends suddenly and what remains is a deserted district of warehouses and empty space. The back part of the Montjuïc mountain is the contrary to what we can find at the other side, it does not have a good connection to the city because it lacks any good reason to provide it, and it goes contrary to the motto of a city that is founded on the concept of public space. The potential of these neighborhoods

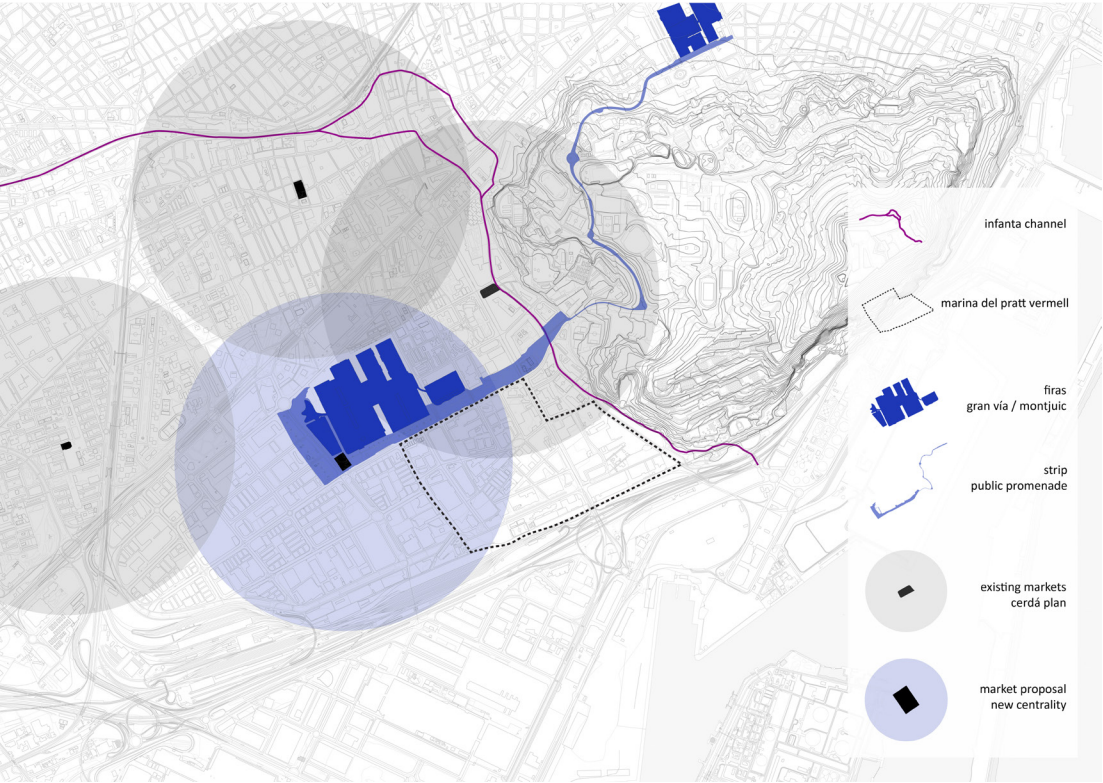
¹ “La Marina Del Prat Vermell.” Institut Municipal d’Urbanisme, Adjunament De Barcelona, ajuntament. barcelona.cat/instituturbanisme/es/la-marina-del-prat-vermell.

to become new areas of productivity in many levels is already seen by planners and developers, the introduction of affordable housing initiatives can bring new income and provide alternatives to live in less centralized areas of Barcelona, but still have a fast and seamless connection to the rest of the metropolis. “... the concept of urban centrality shifts its proximity scale seeking human interaction within close environments, moving from metropolitan scale centralities to new areas of inter-municipal centrality, but which always maintain macro municipal functions.”² Around 70% of the area considered in the new plan is dedicated to the construction of new housing developments, meaning that the approach is heavily oriented toward bringing in new inhabitants to the sector. This is important because it means that the area is not intended to have a fluctuating occupation as it does in the present with the activity of the Fira compound, it is meant to become a new hub for life to develop permanently. This calls for an approach that can satisfy the varied needs of the citizens and create a system independent to that of the surrounding city and at the same time connected to the macro hub.

The conversion of this neighborhood can start a gradual shift in the use of the whole area and take advantage of the potential that the Fira space has to attract activity to the sector. The subway line is already built and provides a fast connection to other parts of the city and there is plenty of free space to reconfigure and build, the events of the convention centre will attract movement and in conjunction to the inhabitants living permanently in the new district they can transform the environment completely. Around the plans for Marina del Prat Vermell is where I make my proposal for a new project of equipment and public space, which takes the mixed-use approach to develop further the link between Barcelona’s centre, the transitional neighborhoods and the Fira area.

² Badía Ferrer, J. (2015). P.7. La Marina del Prat Vermell. ¿Nueva centralidad urbana?. UPC, Barcelona

4.2 PUBLIC PROMENADE. THE FIRAS AND MONTJUIC



It all starts with the desire to recover a historical element of Barcelona that has been forgotten through the years due to the growth of the city. The Infanta Channel was once an important water source for the city that enabled production fields to grow and sustain the demands for food, constructed between 1817 and 1820, this infrastructure was actually the first of its kind in the area and was heavily funded by the private initiative. Besides from being an important source of water for agriculture, the channel also served to the main factories by providing a clean energy source, becoming key to the development of industry. There is currently an effort to recover the structure of the channel and use it as a new historical route for the city, the idea is to provide knowledge about the beginnings of the current Barcelona and to give a new public space that crosses important sectors and links them together. “It is feasible. The Infanta Channel can be recovered in sections... Some can maintain irrigation possibilities, others that can be considered to restore, and others that are underground and could rather become green spaces on the ground floor.”³ The proposal for a connection between the two Firas starts with the recovery of the channel in the part where it reaches Montjuic, this point is used as a generator of a new urban project that joins a neglected part of the city to this network of public space.

The Firas are spaces that generate heavy activity in the city, they are promoters of economical growth and of diversity due to the massive attraction of people and business they provide. The Fira 1 located in the entrance to Montjuic is very successful in the way it relates to the urban structure around it, being located in dense area that already has a lot of activity and connection it thrives from the dynamic setting it is in. The need for more space led to the construction of the Fira 2, which is located in a more peripheral sector of the city, in one hand this allows for a much bigger space for expositions and events due to the large plots available, but on the other it means that the relationship to the activity of the city is much less direct. This means that the infrastructure dedicated to events related to the Fira only has activity when a convention is held, the other times of the year the buildings and public spaces are mainly empty. It is devastating to see so much space and resources dedicated to the construction of areas that are empty most of the time, especially in a zone that has potential to become a new sub center for the city and that can be connected to the

³ Xavier Llobet on Farré, N. (2020, April 9). Barcelona proyecta recuperar el Canal de la Infanta como vía verde. El Periódico. Retrieved from <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/barcelona/20200409>

new network of public space proposed by the Infanta Channel recovery.

A public promenade means a series of spaces that generate urbanity and provide new possibilities and relationships, the new strip proposed to connect the Fira 2 to the city aims to become an extension of central Barcelona to towards the periphery. The strip starts at the Fira site and intersects the Infanta Channel right before entering the Montjuic area, it then crosses the mountain and arrives to the Fira 1 complex. A sequence of spaces and uses is necessary in this grand scale proposal in order to incentive its use and increase its impact as generator of public space, the strip must become part of the contemporary lifestyle and incorporate mixed-use program along with infrastructures currently lacking in this part of the city; the crossing of Montjuic also allows for a deeper relationship with the mountain and provides new paths to access it. As I stated before, the space dedicated to the Fira 2 events needs to change in order to become a place for the citizens to thrive all year round; the introduction of the change in use of the Marina del Prat Vermell area starts to give real opportunity for this conversion to take place. A new mixed-use sector needs some basic infrastructures to function properly, this being commerce, offices, housing, food and public space. And so appears the need for a new centrality, a project that can link all these pieces together and create spaces that at the same time connect the promenade to the Fira and provide the new inhabitants of the area with spaces to interact in community.

The decision to propose a new market for the area comes from a desire to satisfy the basic needs required for the inhabitants to thrive, it is crucial to provide the new district with equipment that allows life in the same conditions as in more centralized parts of the city and to let it acquire a personality of its own. The introduction of the market falls in line with the rules set by the Cerdà Plan, where there should be a market every 900 meters and it should be placed strategically to serve as many people as possible. “...the distribution of markets and health, education and social services can give a sense of Cerdà’s idea of social equality. For him, urbanism was a tool to diminish the differences in the living conditions of the various social classes...”⁴ It is

4 Pallares-Barbera, M., Badia, A., & Buch, J. (2011, December). Cerdà and Barcelona: The need for a new city and service provision. *Urbani Izziv*, 22(2), 122–136. doi: https://www-jstor-org.recursos.biblioteca.upc.edu/stable/pdf/24920583.pdf?ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_SYC-5152%2Ftest&refreqid=excelsior:794860bff3f01ab766553c7c8a93792e

imperative to propose projects that provide this equality of social life and the market seeks to become a piece in the development of a grand scale solution dedicated to serve the civic life through public and mixed spaces.

The new market needs to address all of the ideas I have mentioned until now in order to become something more, its function as a provider of groceries and goods is not enough to incentive new kinds of spaces, there needs to be an idea of turning the market space into a civic center full of multiple ways to experience and live the environment. It has to go beyond the contemporary methods of fast shopping that separate us even more as a society and it has to provide opportunities for the clash between cultures and lifestyles; the public space needs to be configurable and adaptable to change instead of being rigid and imposing and it needs to contribute to diversity. That is why the bridge-building structure is chosen for the proposal, because it enables the free configuration of space while still setting some guidelines to ordain it, the bridge does both the action of actual connection between spaces and acts as a gateway for public space to flow; and at the very core lies the market as the centerpiece around which everything fits together.

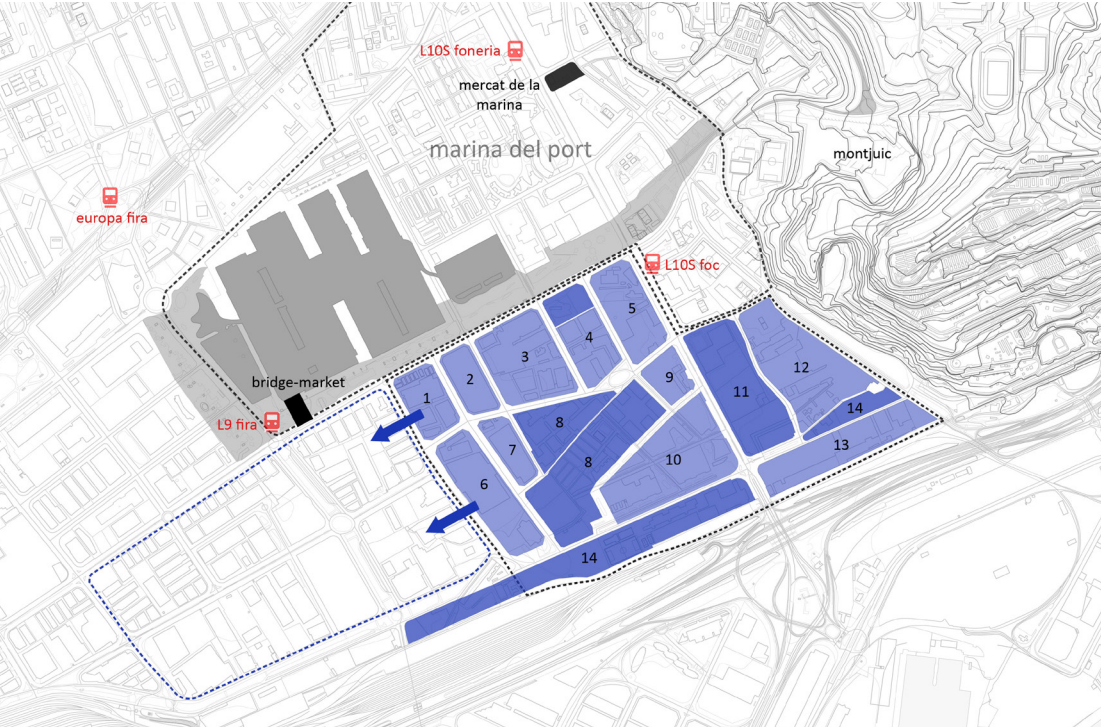
4.3 THE NEW CENTRALITY. NEIGHBORHOOD AND METROPOLIS.



The proposal of the new market must be an integrated solution for daily life, it must take into account living, working, leisure, transport and urban space and create a hub where these aspects can work in conjunction. Before I mentioned the marketplaces's loss of relevance in daily life due to the fact that supermarkets and convenience stores have become more practical approaches to fast shopping, there is a need to be able to have everything in reach quickly, life is moving at a much faster pace than in the past.

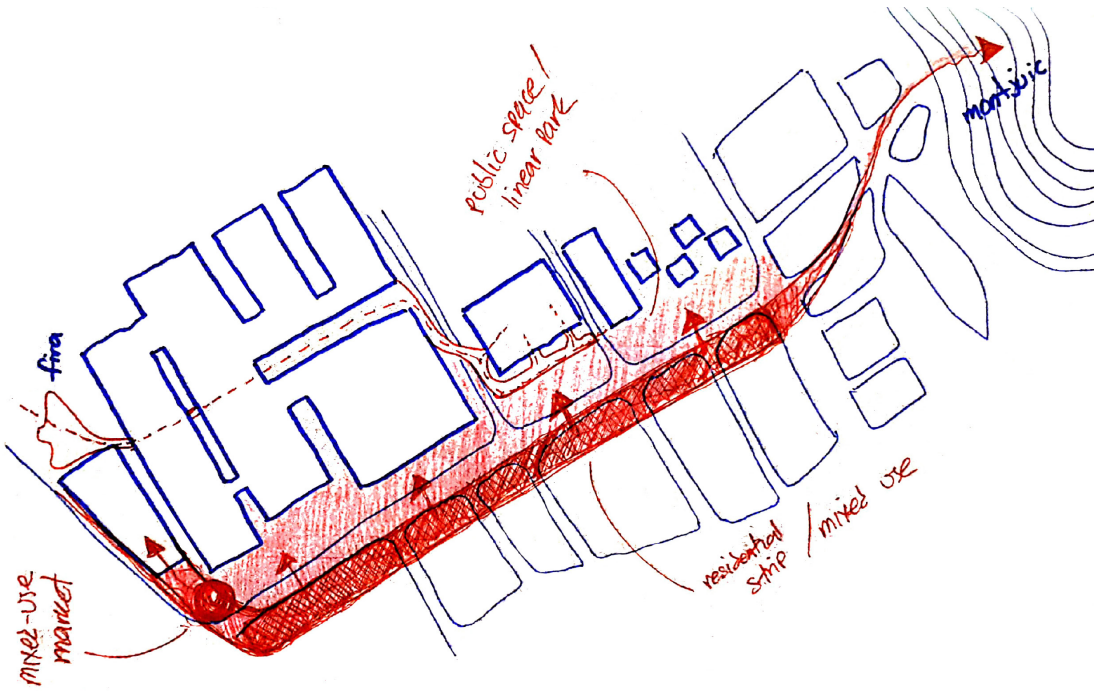
Markets then have to become places of many possibilities, not isolated buildings dedicated solely to the exchange of goods but also to the other activities in daily life. This is the reason why the mixed-use concept is key in the proposal, a building or set of buildings that offer life in conjunction. The proposal takes the shape of a bridge that connects the public and private spaces and serves as a new centrality for a developing part of the city.

The new market is placed right in front of the Fira II at the end of a public promenade that connects it through Montjuic into the Fira I. This promenade is proposed due to the current change in use of the Marina del Prat Vermell area from industrial to mixed use. The transformation of this part of L'Hospitalet requires new mixed use developments and equipment in order to be successful.



The conversion of La Marina del Prat Vermell is divided into sectors, the reorganization of new plots and the construction of residential buildings has already started in areas 8, 11, and 14. There is a plan to completely transform all zones and to arrive at a new occupancy of 30,000 inhabitants, this will create a strong bond with the already inhabited Marina del Port. The connection to the subway and train system in the area, along with multiple bus routes, already allows for an efficient link with the rest of the city.

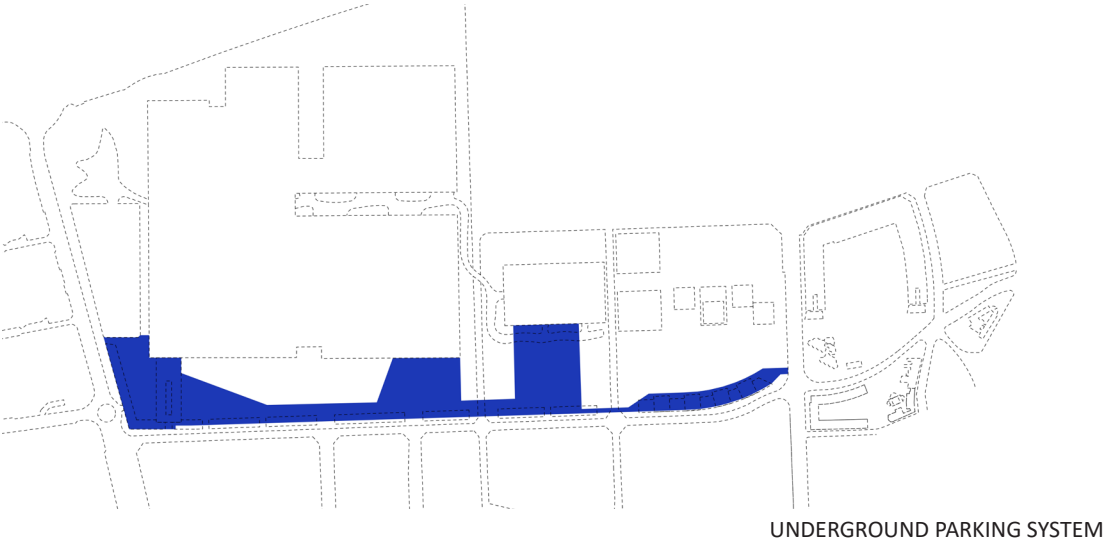
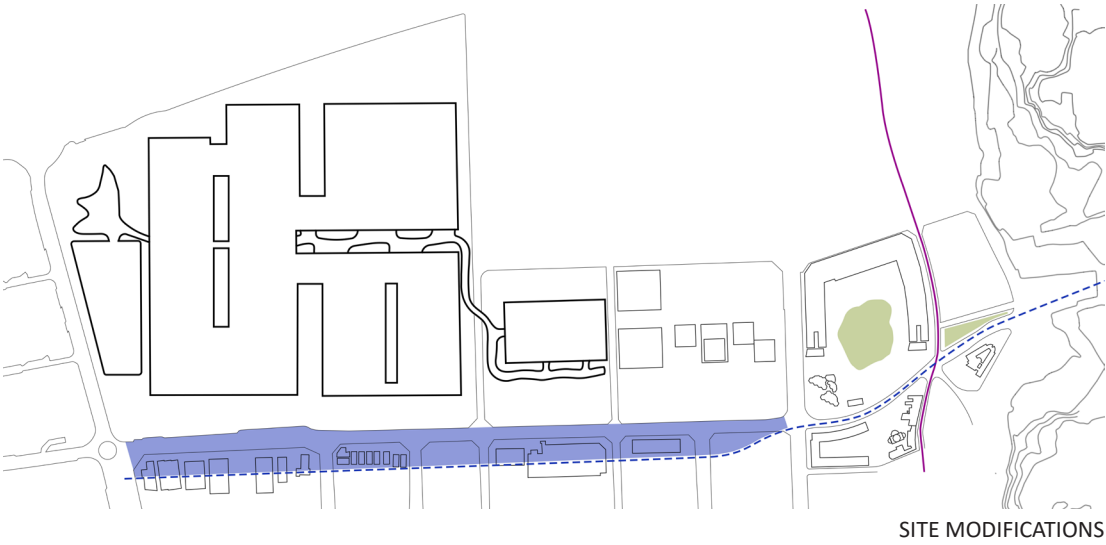
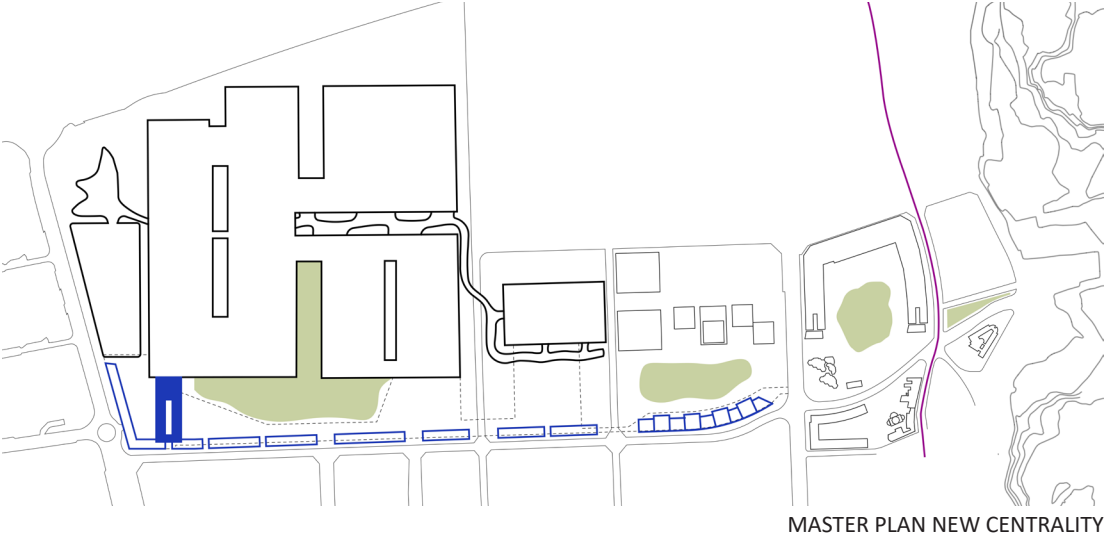
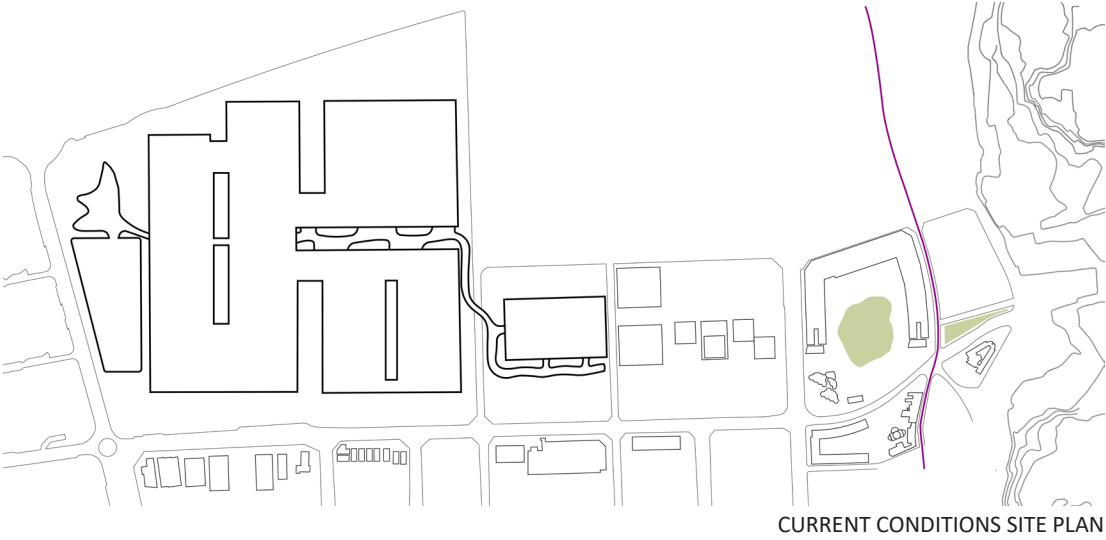
There is a strong possibility of further growth of the Marina del Prat plan and the extension of the new residential district. The proposal of a new market and civic space in the area is a must in order to provide the citizens with the necessary urban equipment.



Taking into account the growth of the mentioned neighborhoods, the urban scale proposal of the project centers around the idea of a mixed-use strip that generates both activity and public space. By reconfiguring the blocks immediately in front of the Fira II area there is a possibility make room for the public promenade that ends in front of the convention center, which is the site for the new marketplace.

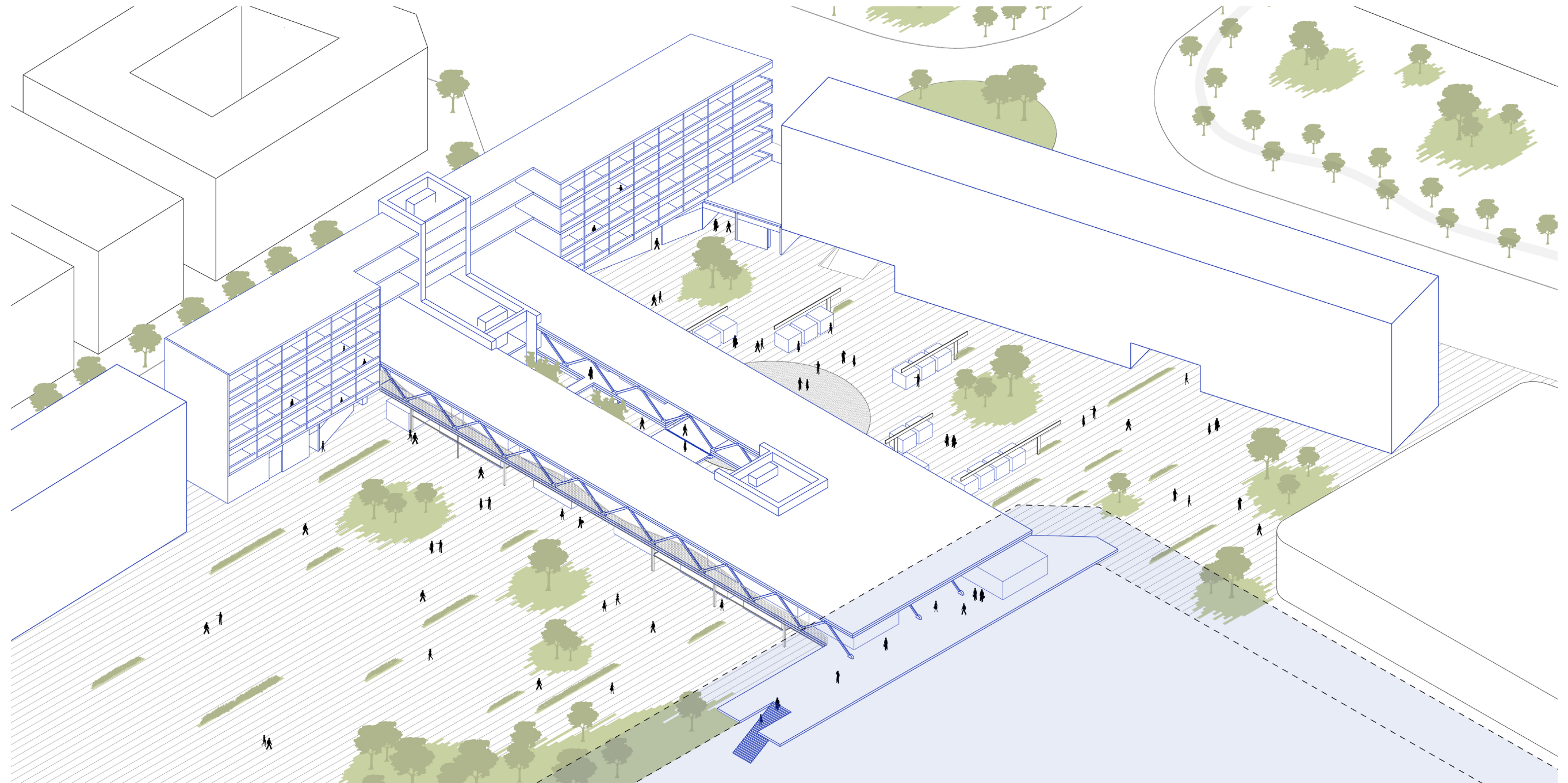
The whole proposal presents the possibility to connect the immediate neighborhood with the rest of the metropolis, and generate activity that can serve both the immediate areas and extend into the city.

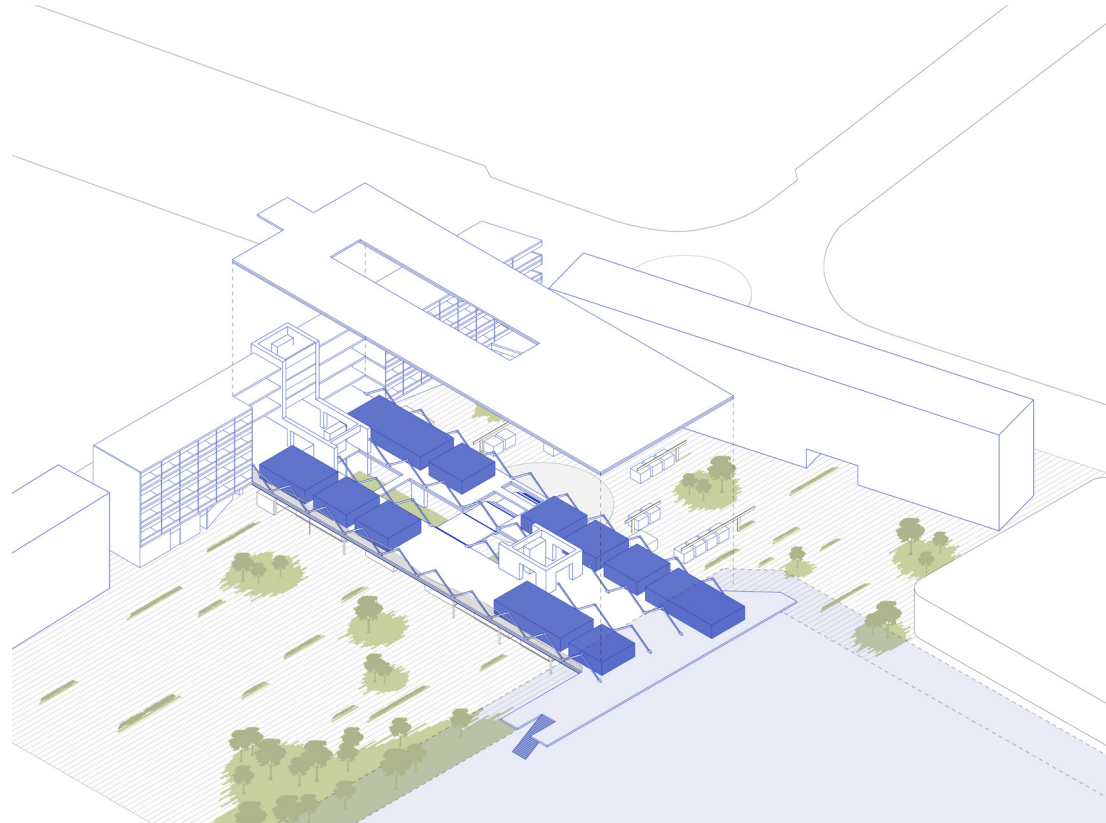
MEDIATING BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOOD AND METROPOLIS



infanta channel
modification of carrer de foc
mixed use development plots

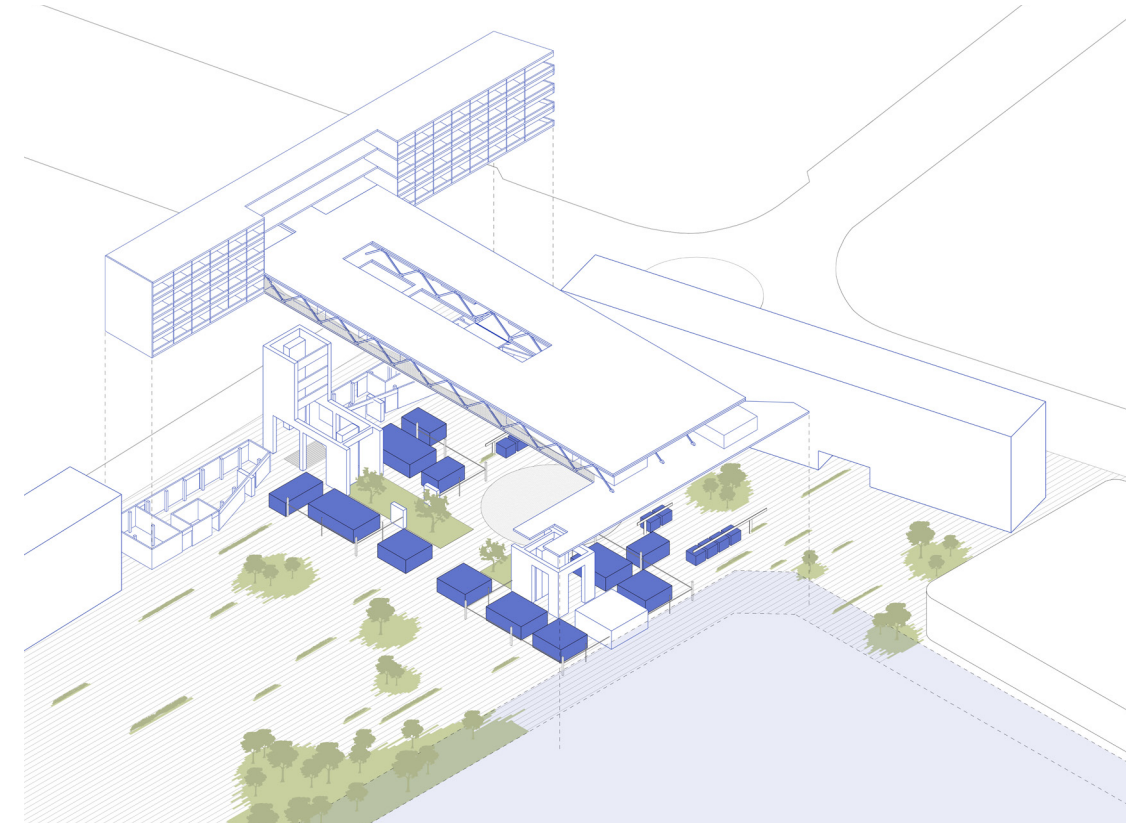
4.4 BRIDGE-MARKET. THE MARKET AS A PUBLIC SPACE





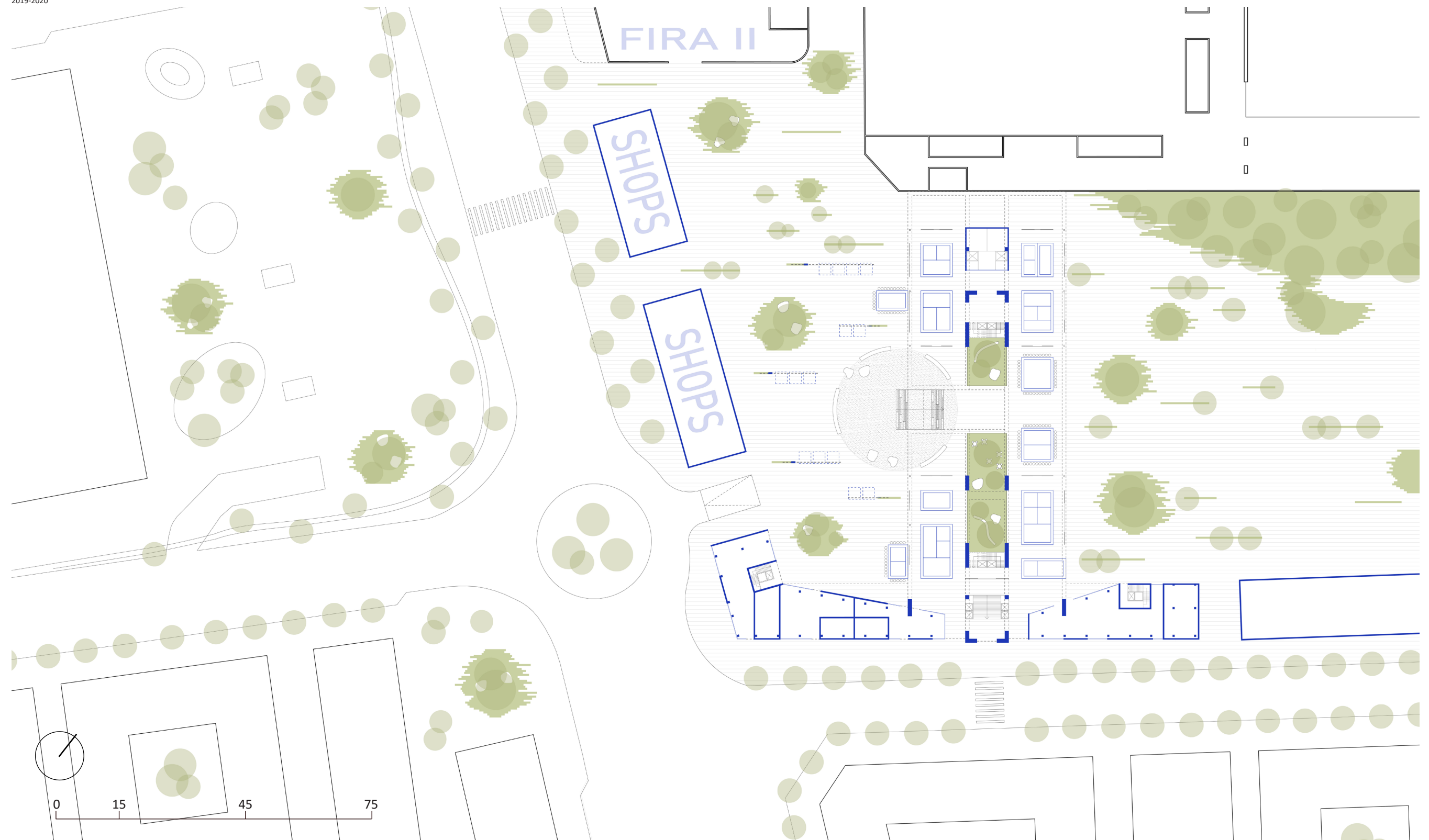
The bridge-like structure of the volume makes it possible to literally connect the private and public realms. Affordable housing destined for temporary stays works in conjunction with the co-working and leisure spaces and the building inserts itself into the Fira II through the top level.

The whole bridge also serves as a gateway from the city into the marketplace and the civic spaces on the ground floor.

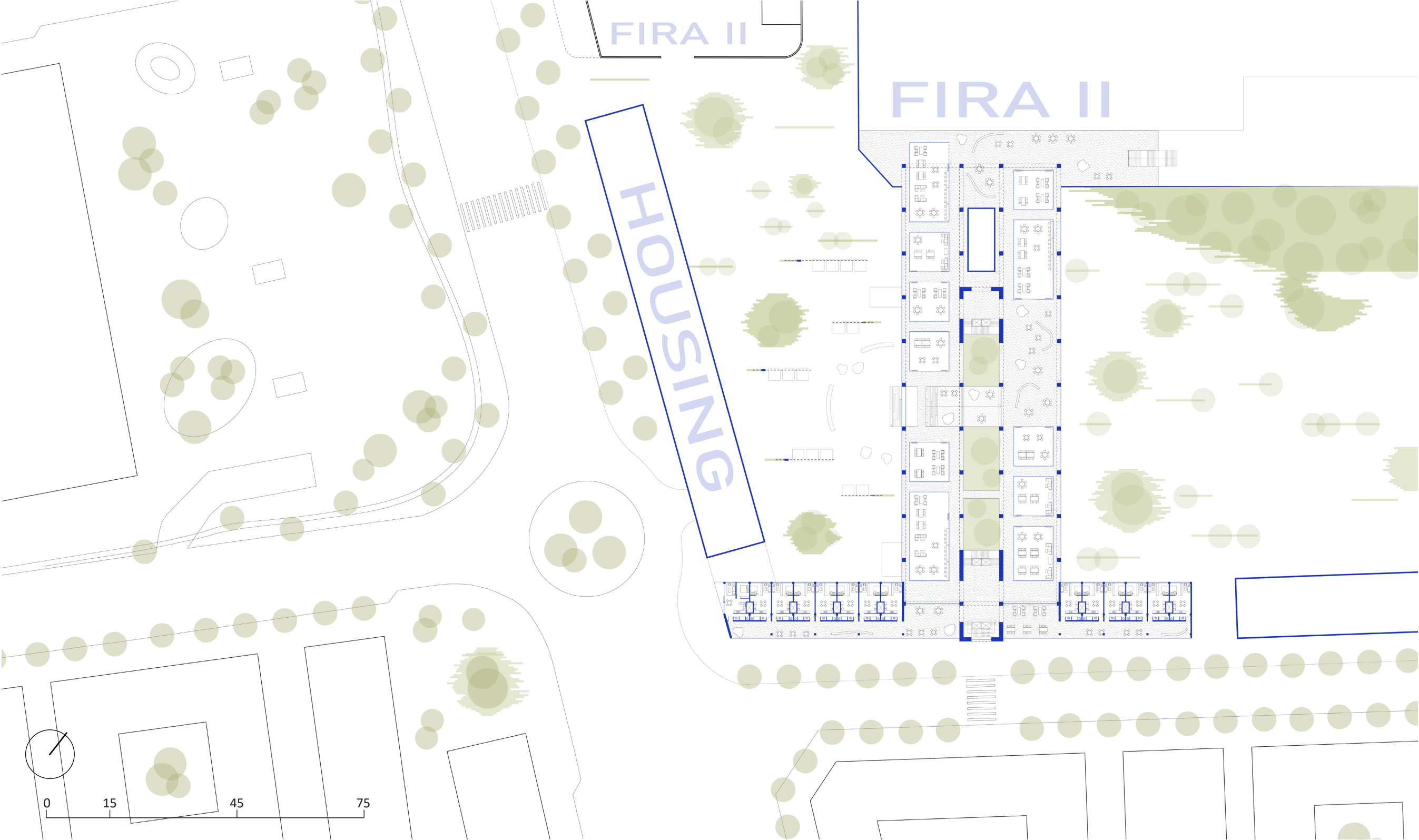


The marketplace is placed at the center of the whole proposal, and thus becomes the piece that makes the entire system work together. The structures enclosing the central space serve as mediators that communicate with the immediate city and the future mixed-use developments to appear in the neighborhood.

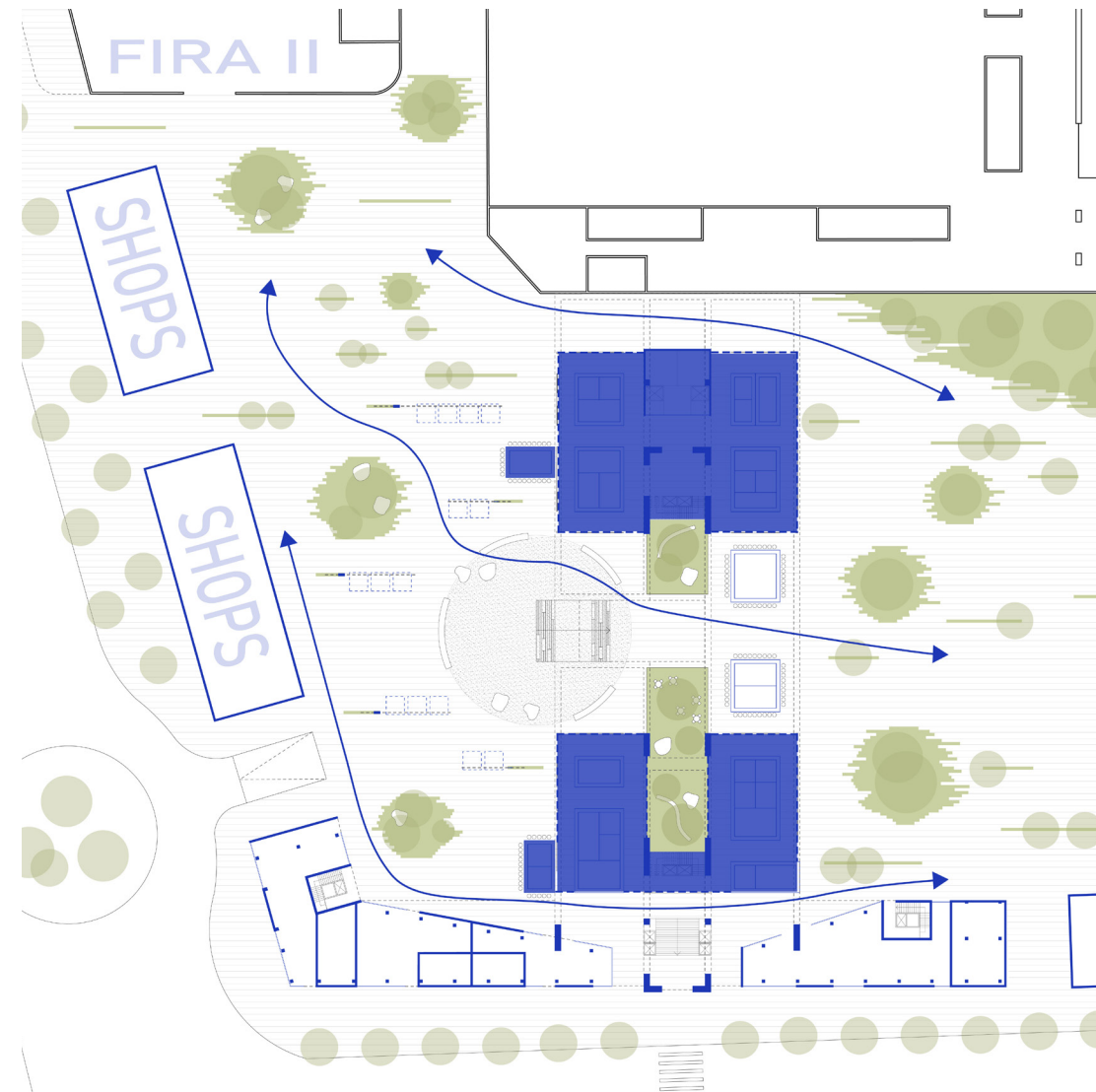
SYSTEM, NOT LAYERS



GROUND FLOOR. FLOW WITH THE CITY

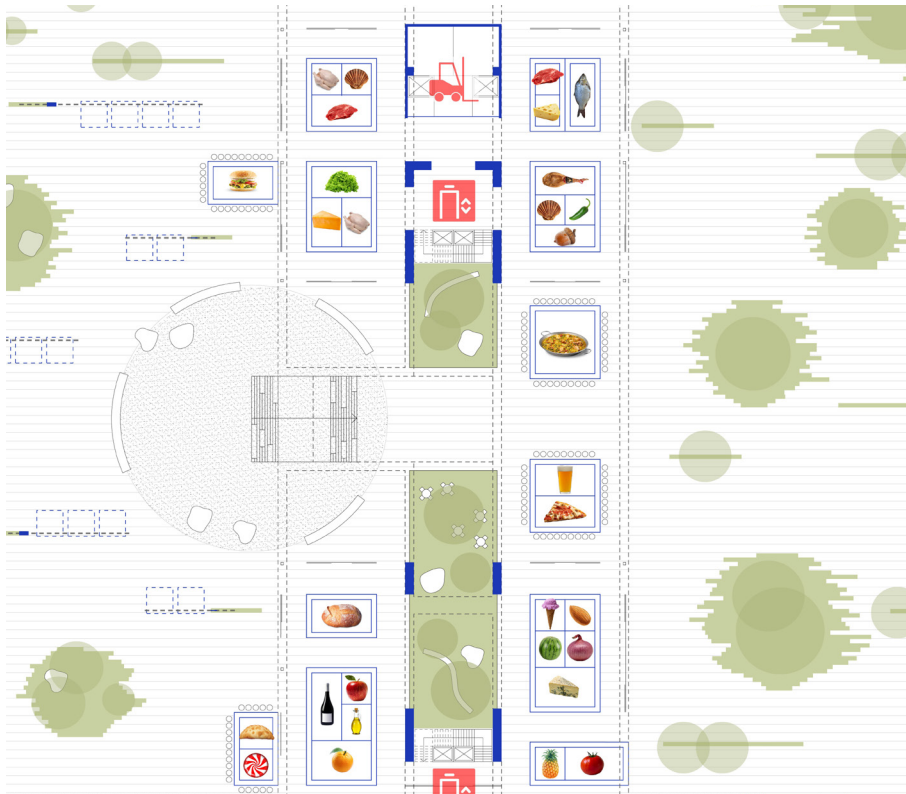
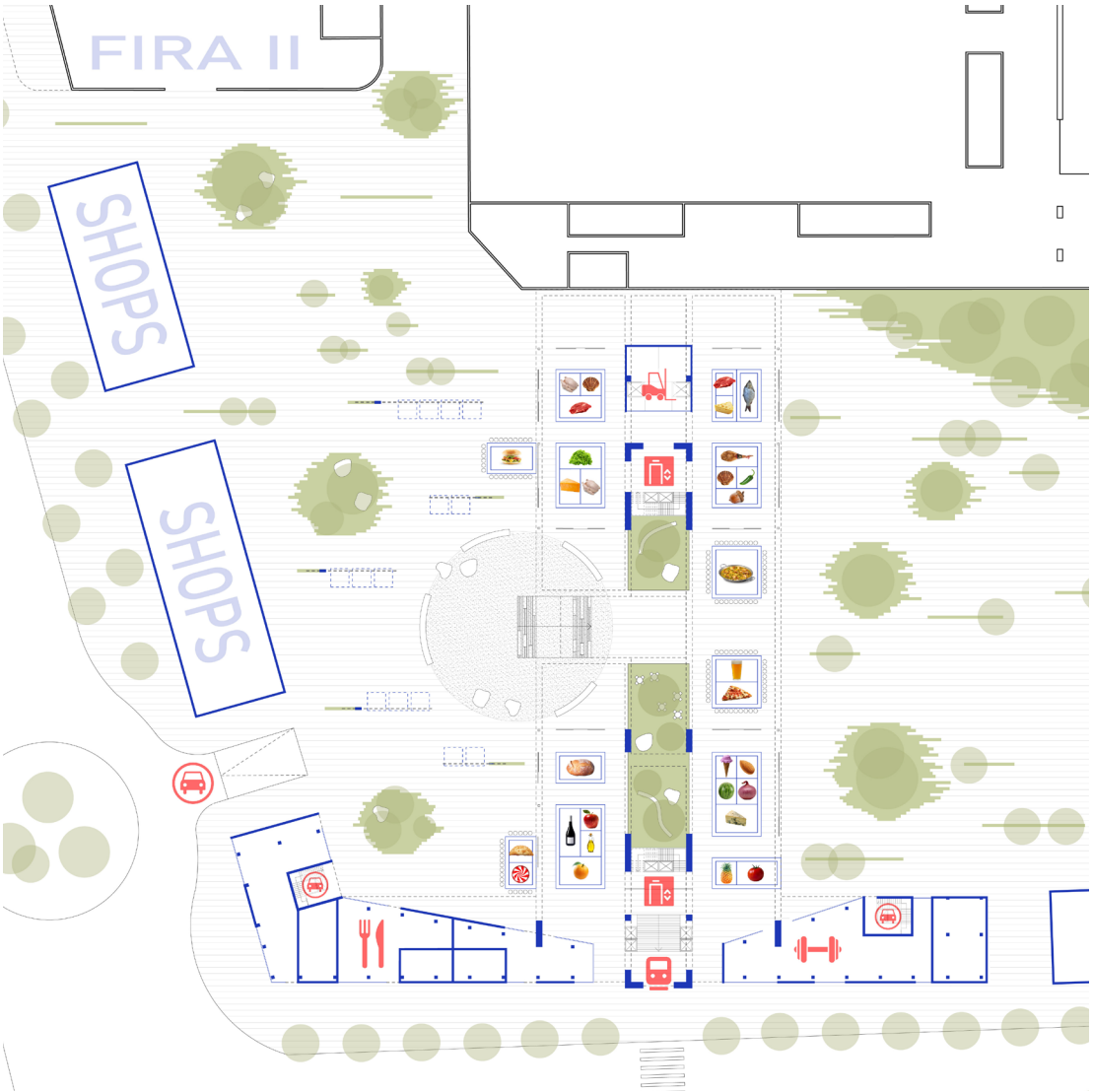


UPPER FLOOR. THE PRIVATE PUBLIC SPACE



The market can be closed off during the night with a sliding curtain wall system, the configuration of the stalls makes it possible to shut down the commercial area in two separate boxes and still allow free flow of the ground floor and connectivity to the metro line.

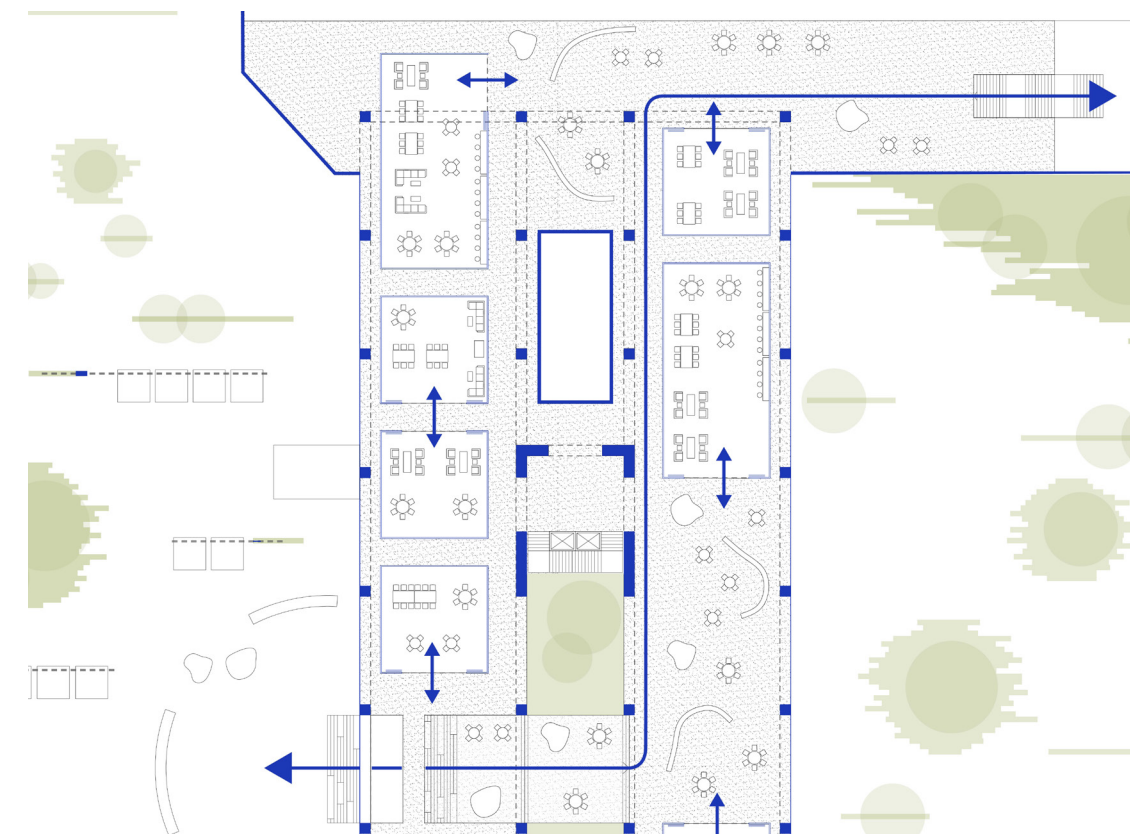
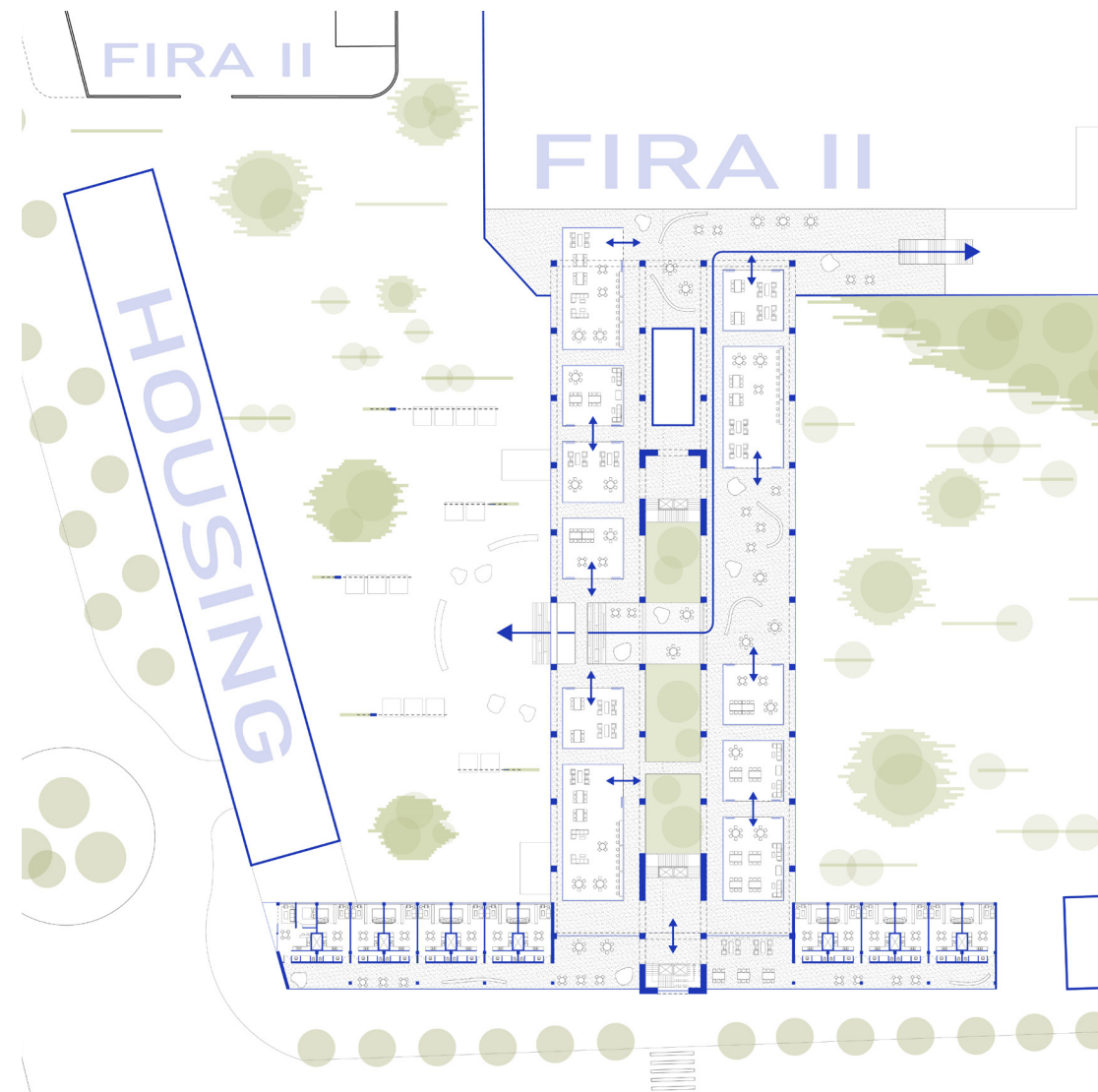
MARKET PERMEABILITY SYSTEM



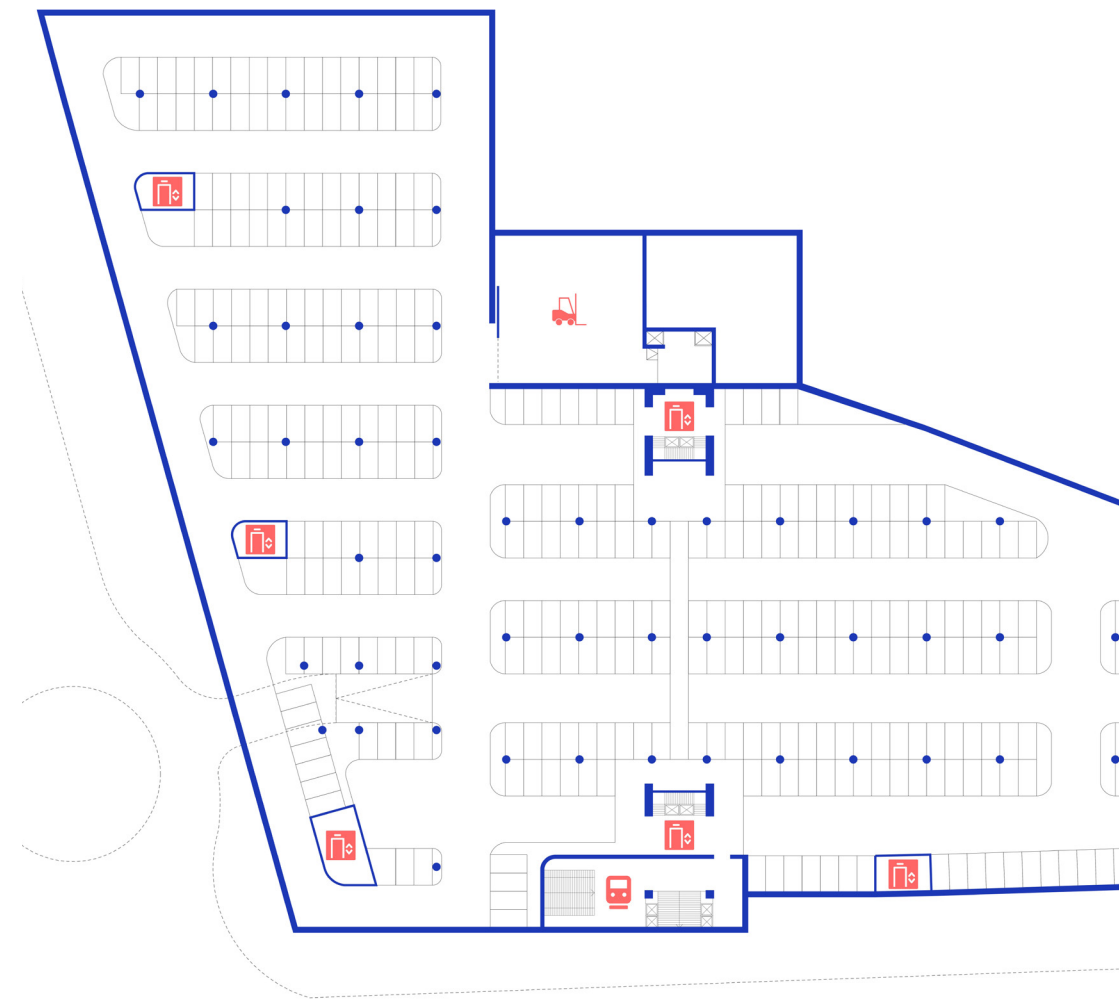
The market stalls are arranged strategically in order to take advantage of the load-
ing and unloading circulation. Meat and other fresh-product stalls that need special
infrastructure and installations are closer to the service areas; the goods are grouped
by sectors to make shopping easier and at the same time enough distancing between
similar stalls is maintained so they do not compete with each other.

The area surrounding the marketplace offers restaurants, fitness and other mixed-use
areas that complement the basic needs of the inhabitants and visitors.

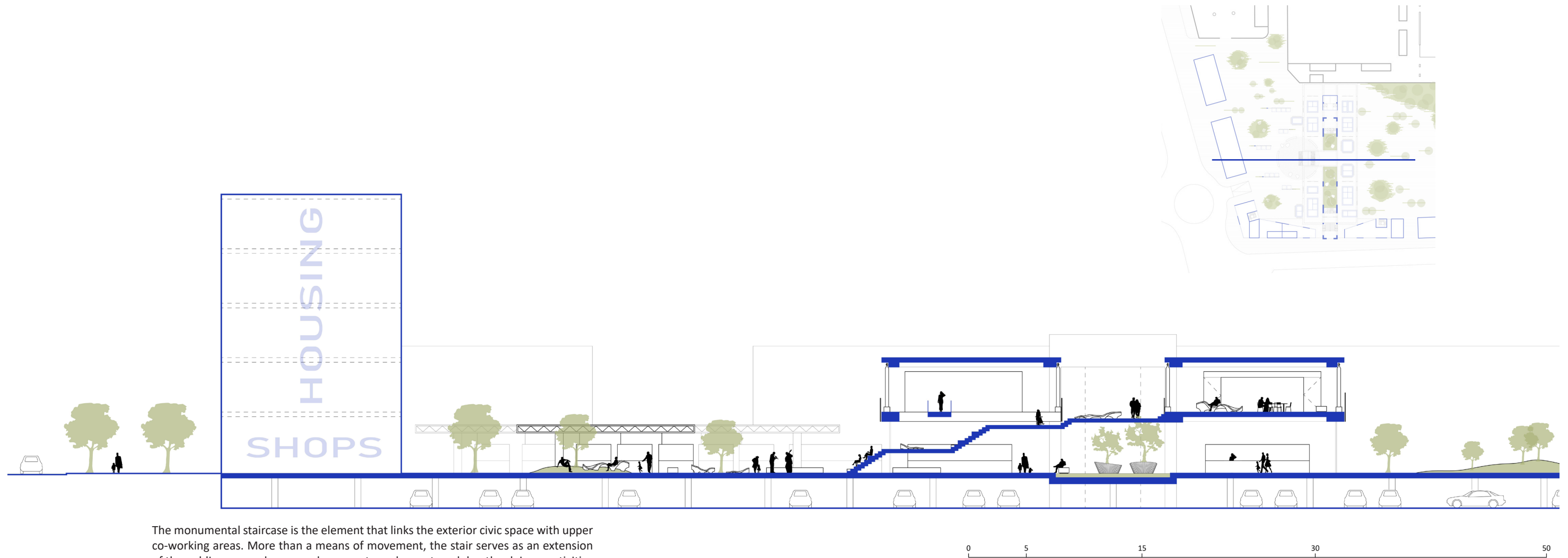
STALL LAYOUT AND SURROUNDING PROGRAM



The main purpose of the monumental staircase is to link the open area of the ground floor with the Fira building through the co-working spaces in the upper level. The multipurpose offices and working areas can be more or less open to the outside according to the specific needs of the users, the boxes can be interconnected or isolated in order to provide a more configurable structure.



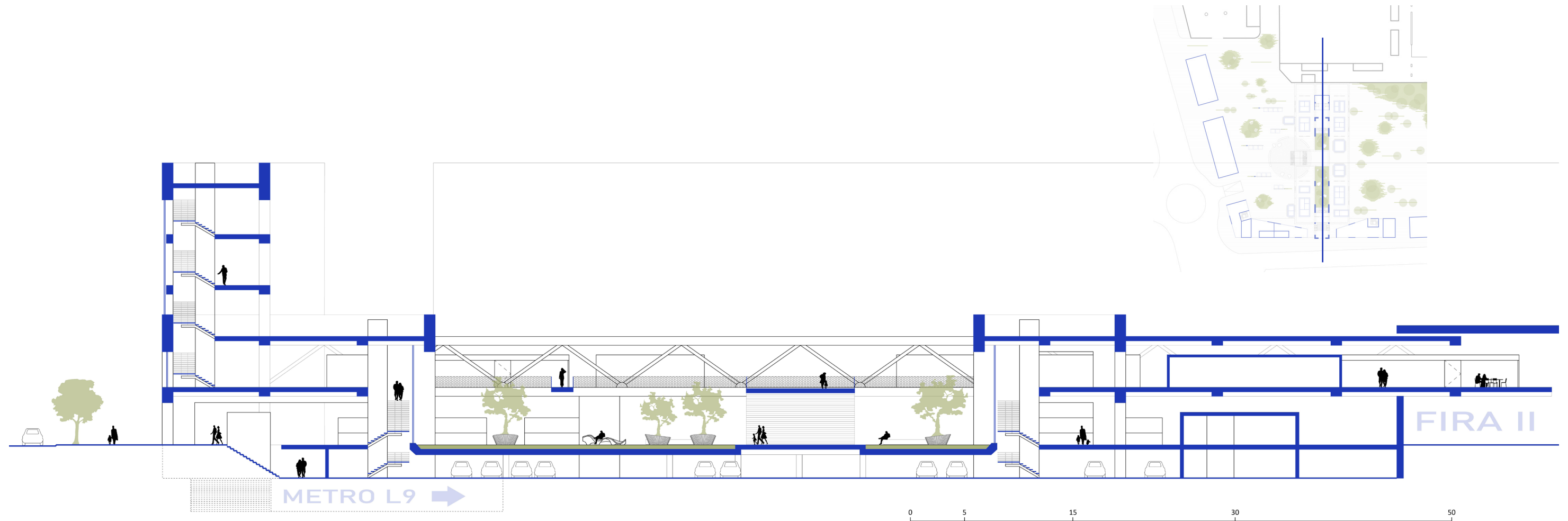
PARKING LOGISTICS



The monumental staircase is the element that links the exterior civic space with upper co-working areas. More than a means of movement, the stair serves as an extension of the public space, where people can rest, work, meet, and do other leisure activities always inside the marketplace environment.

The exterior space provides the opportunity for temporary markets and other events that take full advantage of the activity in the area. Permanent lightweight structures provide the possibility to “plug-in” different stands or additional elements according to the specific needs.

THE “STAYIR”. MEDIATING THE IN-BETWEEN.



There is a strong link between each of the areas in the project, they work as a system in conjunction and not in isolation. The connection to the existing metro lines provides access to the city, housing, co-working, and marketplace become a machine for urban activity.

The central garden brings light and ventilation into the marketplace and at the same time offers resting and meeting spaces.

THE MARKET AS A MACHINE FOR URBANITY



The facade of the marketplace aims for permeability, the upper level is covered in a perforated steel screen that lets air and light through. The waving shape provides with more privacy in the working areas and with more transparency in the more social spaces. On the ground, the curtain wall connects both visually and physically the market stalls and the exterior.

PERMEABLE WAVES



CLOSING THOUGHTS

Since the beginning of the Master Studies I have wanted to write about the market; what attracted me the most is that this is a place that was born through the action of exchanging culture. Yes, in the beginning it was out of necessity, but nevertheless it was always accompanied by a sense of discovery. It provided foreign, unknown produce that was only accessible in other parts of the world and created a network of knowledge; a network which is still most definitely in place and continues to grow and evolve.

Our society is interconnected now more than ever, exchange can happen through media and other digital resources; but the need for food, ingredients, produce and other goods remains a necessity of our everyday lives. Cultural clash is what makes each of us unique, and when we as architects are able to imagine and produce spaces that allow for a positive superposition of ideologies and communities we can truly claim an architecture that strives towards the future.

The bridge-market proposal takes much inspiration from the markets I have had the pleasure of visiting in Barcelona, wonderful places which in many cases combine a rich architectonic history and a deep relationship with food and culture. But it also addresses a possibility for improvement, it puts in evidence the potential the marketplace environment has to re appear as a civic center and re establish a proper balance between consumerism and true social interaction. Through my thesis I managed to better understand the complexity of the market’s structure, the many factors that play a role in its development and its sustenance, it was an opportunity to reflect on how public space influences our current reality and to question what we could be improved upon as architects and planners.

I want to give special thanks to Lluís Ortega Cerda for his continuous feedback and discussion on my work, as well as to Eduard Bru Bistuer, Xavier Llobet Ribeiro, and Marta Domènech Rodríguez for their contributions in our joint sessions. To the rest of the professors of the MBArch, thank you for sharing your thoughts on architecture, theory, and design, which definitely have influenced me when writing and producing this thesis.

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